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SPEECHES
OF
MR. RANDOLPH,
ON
The Greek Question;
ON
Internal Improvement;
AND ON THE
Tariff Bill.

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES.

WASHINGTON:

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1824.

SPEECH

OF

MR. RANDOLPH,

ON

The Greek Question.

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

January 20, 1824.

On motion of Mr. WEBSTER, the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole, on the state of the Union, Mr. TAYLOR in the chair.

MR. CLAY offered the following, which he desired to lay on the table for consideration.

"Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That the people of these States would not see, without serious inquietude, any forcible interposition, by the Allied Powers of Europe, in behalf of Spain, to reduce to their former subjection those parts of the continent of America which have proclaimed and established for themselves, respectively, Independent Governments, and which have been solemnly recognized by the United States."

The committee of the whole having resumed the consideration of the resolution recommending an appropriation to defray the expense of a mission to Greece,

MR. POINSETT, of South Carolina, rose, and addressed the House, in a speech of some length, which he concluded by moving the following amendment:

"Resolved, That this House view with deep interest the heroic struggle of the Greeks to elevate themselves to the rank of a free and independent nation; and to unite with the President in the sentiments he has expressed in their favor; in sympathy for their sufferings, in interest in their welfare, and in ardent wishes for their success."

"Resolved, That this House concur in the sentiments expressed by the President, in relation to this hemisphere, and would view any attempt to oppress or control the free governments of America south of us, by the Allied Powers of Europe, as dangerous to the peace and happiness of the United States; and that such measures as may be deemed expedient to protect them from the attacks of any power, other than that of Spain alone, and unassisted, will meet its cordial support."

[The latter resolution was withdrawn by Mr. P. in consequence of a resolution to a similar effect having been laid upon the table by the Speaker. This explanation is necessary to an understanding of Mr. Randolph's remarks.]

MR. RANDOLPH then rose, and said, that this was perhaps one of finest and prettiest themes for declamation ever presented to a deliberative assembly. But, it appeared to him in a light very different

from any that had as yet been thrown upon it. He looked at the measure as one fraught with deep and deadly danger to the best interests and to the liberties of the American people; and so satisfied was he of this, that he had been constrained by that conviction to overcome the almost insuperable repugnance he felt to throwing himself upon the notice of the House; but he felt it to be his duty to raise his voice against both the propositions.

He would not, at this time, go at length into the subject: his intention in rising was, merely, to move that the committee rise, and that both of the resolutions might be printed. He wished to have some time to think of this business—to deliberate, before we took this leap in the dark into the Archipelago, or the Black Sea, or into the wide-mouthed La Plata. He might be permitted to add one or two other views. He knew, he said, that the post of honor was on the other side of the House, the post of toil and of difficulty on this side, if, indeed, any body should be with him on this side. It was a difficult and an invidious task, to stem the torrent of public sentiment, when all the generous feelings of the human heart were appealed to. But, sir, said Mr. R., I was delegated to this House to guard the interests of the People of the United States, not to guard the rights of other people; and, if it was doubted, even in the case of England, that land, fertile above all other lands, (not excepting Greece herself,) in great and glorious men—if it was doubted whether her interference in the politics of the continent, though separated from it only by a narrow strait, not so wide as the Chesapeake, as our Mediterranean sea—had redounded either to her honor or her advantage; if the effect of that interference has been a monumental debt that paralyses the arm that might now strike for Greece, that certainly would have struck for Spain, can it be for us to seek, in the very bottom of the Mediterranean, for a quarrel with the Ottoman Porte? And this, while we have an ocean rolling between? While we are in that sea without a single port in which to refit a gun-boat, and while the powers of Barbary lie in succession in our path, shall we open this Pandora's box of political evils? It has been wisely and truly said, that it is possible the mere rumor of our interference may produce, at Constantinople, or at Smyrna, that which will drive us at once into a war. We all know the connection that subsists between the Barbary states and what we may denominate the mother power. Are we prepared for a war with these pirates? (not that we are not perfectly competent to such a war, but) Does it suit our finances? Does it, sir, suit our magnificent projects of roads and canals? Does it suit the temper of our people? Does it promote their interests? Will it add to their happiness? Sir, why did we remain supine while Piedmont and Naples were crushed by Austria? Why did we stand aloof, while the Spanish peninsula was again reduced under *legitimate* government? If we did not interfere then, why now? Sir, I refer you to the memorable attempted interference in the case of one of the loftiest and most unbending of statesmen, when he was in the zenith of his glory—when all his dazzling beams were unshorn—I mean Mr. Pitt; and I refer you as a commentary on that attempted in-

terference, to the speech of Mr. Fox; a speech fraught with the wisdom of a real statesman. [Here Mr. Randolph paused—when he resumed, he said,] I perceive, sir, that I have overcalculated my strength. I feel I am not what I was. The effort of speaking is too much for me. The physical effort has suspended, (as, when physical effort is violent, it always does,) the exercise of the intellectual faculty. What I wished to say was, that this Quixotism, in regard either to Greece or to South America, or, I will add, to North America, (so much of it as lies without our own boundary—I mean Mexico and Guatimala,) that this Quixotism is not what the sober and reflecting minds of our people require at our hands. Sir, we are in debt as individuals, and we are in debt as a nation; and never, since the days of Saul and David, of Cæsar and Catiline, could a more unpropitious period have been found for such an undertaking. The state of society is too much disturbed. There is always, in a debtor, a tendency either to torpor or to desperation—neither condition is friendly to such deliberations. But he would suspend what he had further to say on the subject. For himself, he saw as much danger, and more, in the resolution proposed by the gentleman from Kentucky, as in that of the gentleman from Massachusetts. The war that may follow on the one is a distant war; it lies on the other side of the ocean. The war that may be induced by the other, is a war at hand; it is on the same continent. He was equally opposed to the amendment as well as to that which had since been offered to the original resolutions. Let us look a little further at all of them. Let us sleep upon them before we pass resolutions which, I will not say, are mere loops to hang speeches on, and thereby commit the nation to a war, the issues of which it is not given to human sagacity to divine.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

JANUARY 24.

The House then again resolved itself into a Committee of the whole, Mr. TAYLOR in the chair, on the State of the Union, and resumed the consideration of Mr. Webster's resolution, for sending an agent to Greece, and the amendment thereto proposed by Mr. Poinsett, which proposes to limit the resolve to the expression of a sentiment decisively favorable to the Greek cause.

The depending question having been stated,

MR. RANDOLPH rose, and said, that it was, to him, a subject of unfeigned regret, that the very few unpremeditated words into which, a few days since, he had been so suddenly and unexpectedly betrayed, should, in the opinion of those for whose judgment he had much greater deference than for his own, have begot a necessity for some further illustration. He could, with the most serious and unaffected sincerity, assure the Committee, that, whenever he was so unfortunate as to be under the necessity of trespassing on their attention, the pain which it gave them to listen, was not greater than that which he felt in addressing them; and he hoped that that consideration would secure a respectful attention to the little—the very little, that he had to say.

Sir, said Mr. R. the resolution before you, if we are to take the word of the honorable gentleman that moved it, is, in itself, almost nothing—a speck in the political horizon:—but, Sir, no man better knows than the honorable mover, that it is from clouds of that portent in the moral and political as well as in the natural atmosphere, that storms, the most disastrous in their consequences, usually proceed. The resolution, in itself, is nothing, when compared with the consequences which it involves. It appears to me that the bearings and consequences of the measure proposed by this resolution have not yet been traced to their utmost extent; nor, by any means, Mr. R. said, did he intend to undertake the task. But he would give the committee, as succinctly as he could, some of the views in which it presented itself to him.

It is with serious concern and alarm, said Mr. R. that I have heard doctrines broached in this debate, fraught with consequences more disastrous to the best interests of this People, than any that I ever heard advanced during the five and twenty years since I have been honored with a seat on this floor. They imply, to my apprehension, a total and fundamental change of the policy pursued by this government, *ab urbe condita*—from the foundation of the Republic, to the present day. Are we, sir, to go on a crusade, in another hemisphere, for the propagation of two objects as dear and delightful to my heart as to that of any gentleman in this, or in any other assembly—Liberty and Religion—and, in the name of these holy words—by this powerful spell, is this nation to be conjured and beguiled out of the high way of Heaven—out of its present comparatively happy state, into all the disastrous conflicts arising from the policy of European powers, with all the consequences which flow from them? Liberty and Religion, Sir! Things that are yet dear, in spite of all the mischief that has been perpetrated in their name. I believe that nothing similar to this proposition is to be found in modern history, unless in the famous decree of the French National Assembly, which brought combined Europe against them, with its united strength, and, after repeated struggles, finally effected the downfall of the French power. Sir, I am wrong—there is another example of like doctrine; and you find it among that strange and peculiar people—in that mysterious book, which is of the highest authority with them, (for it is at once their gospel and their law—) the Koran, which enjoins it to be the duty of all good Moslems to propagate its doctrines at the point of the sword; by the edge of the cimeter. The character of that people is a peculiar one: they differ from every other race. It has been said, here, that it is four hundred years since they encamped in Europe. Sir, said Mr. R. they were encamped; where we now find them, before this country was discovered, and their title to the country which they occupy is at least as good as ours. They hold their possessions there by the same title by which all other countries are held—possession obtained, at first, by a successful employment of force, confirmed by time, by usage, by prescription—the best of all possible titles. Their policy, Mr. R. said, had been, not tortuous, like that of other States of Europe, but straight forward; they had invariably

appealed to the sword, and they held by the sword. The Russ had, indeed, made great encroachments on their empire, but the ground had been contested inch by inch; and the acquisitions of Russia, on the side of Christian Europe—Livonia, Ingria, Courland—Finland to the Gulf of Bothnia—Poland!—had been greater than she had made of the Mahometans. And, in consequence of this straight forward policy to which he had before referred, this peculiar people could boast of being the only one of the Powers of Continental Europe, whose capital had never been insulted by the presence of a foreign military force. It was a curious fact, well worthy of attention, that Constantinople was the only capital in Continental Europe—for Moscow was the true capital of Russia—that had never been in possession of an enemy. It is, indeed, true, said Mr. R. that the Empress Catharine did inscribe over the gate of one of the cities that she won in the Krimea, (Cherson, I think,) “the road to Byzantium:” but, sir, it has proved—perhaps too low a word for the subject—but a *stumpy road* for Russia. Who, at that day, would have been believed had he foretold to that august (for so she was) and illustrious woman, that her Cossacs of the Ukraine, and of the Don, would have been encamped in Paris before they reached Constantinople? Who would have been believed if he had foretold that a French invading force, such as the world never saw before, and, I trust, will never again see—would lay Moscow itself in ashes? These are considerations worthy of attention before we embark in the project proposed by this resolution, the consequences of which no human eye can divine.

I would respectfully ask the gentleman from Massachusetts, said Mr. R. whether, in his very able and masterly argument—and he has said all that could be said upon the subject, and more than I supposed could have been said by any man, in favor of his resolution—whether he himself has not furnished an answer to his speech—I had not the happiness myself to hear his speech, but a friend has read it to me—in one of the arguments in that speech. Towards the conclusion, I think, of his speech, the gentleman lays down, from Puffendorff, in reference to the honored words and pious professions of the Holy Alliance, that these are all surplussage, because nations are always supposed to be ready to do what justice and national law require. Well, sir, said Mr. R. if this be so—why may not the Greeks presume—why are they not, on this principle, bound to presume—that this government is disposed to do all, in reference to them, that they ought to do, without any formal resolutions to that effect? I ask the gentleman from Massachusetts, whether the doctrine of Puffendorff does not apply as strongly to the resolution as to the declaration of the Allies—that is, if the resolution of the gentleman be indeed that almost nothing he would have us suppose, if there be not something *behind* this nothing which divides this House (not *horizontally* as the gentleman has somewhat quaintly said—but *vertically*) into two unequal parties, one the advocate of a splendid system of crusades, the other the friends of peace and harmony; the

advocates of a *fire-side policy*—for, as long as all is right at the fire-side, there cannot be much wrong elsewhere—whether, he repeated, does not the doctrine of Puffendorff apply as well to the words of the resolution as to the words of the Holy Alliance?

But, sir, we have already done more than this. The President of the United States, the only organ of communication which the people have seen fit to establish between us and foreign powers, has already expressed all, in reference to Greece, that the resolution goes to express. *Actum est*—it is done—it is finished—there is an end. Not, Mr. R. said, that he would have the House to infer that he meant to express any opinion as to the policy of such a declaration—and the practice of responding to Presidential addresses and messages had gone out for, now, these two or three and twenty years.

Mr. R. then went on to say that he had thought, if the great master of political philosophy could arise from the dead, or had his valuable life been spared till now, he would not only have been relieved from all his terrors on the subject of a regicide peace, but also have witnessed a return of the age of chivalry and the banishment of calculation even from the estimates of statesmen, which that great man could never have foreseen; for, the proposition now under consideration was that something new under the sun, which Solomon himself, the wisest of mankind, never dreamed of. Is this *all*? No sir, said Mr. R. if that was all, I should not have thrown myself upon your attention. But this is not all. Cases have already been stated, to which the principle of the resolution equally applies as to that of the Greeks. In addition to those already put, I will take the case of Canada, if you will. It is known to every body, that discontents have for some time existed in the Canadian Provinces, with the mother country and the measures of its government. Suppose the people of the British colonies to the North of us undertake to throw off the yoke—I will not put the case of Jamaica, because they, unhappily, are slave holders—are you ready to stake the peace, and welfare, and the resources of this nation, in support of Canadian independence? Your doctrine goes that length—you cannot stop short of it. Where, in that case, will be the assistance of Great Britain, already referred to in debate as being the only spot in the world in which liberty resides except our own country? After some other observations, Mr. R. adduced another people in valorous achievement and daring spirit on a footing with these Greeks themselves—and who had achieved their independence from a bondage far heavier than that of the Greeks to the Turks. How is it, sir, said Mr. R. that we have never sent an envoy to our sister republic of Hayti? Here is a case that fits—a case beyond dispute. It is not that of a people who have “almost”—(aye sir! “almost” but *not altogether*)—who have “almost,” but perfectly achieved their independence. To attempt to shew that these cases are equally within the range of the principle of the resolution, would be to shew a disrespect to the intellects of those around me. The man who cannot pursue the inference, would not recognize my picture, though, like the Dutchman’s painting, were written under it, “*This is the man, that the horse.*”

There was another remark that fell from the gentleman from Massachusetts—of which, Mr. R. said, he should speak, as he always should speak of any thing from that gentleman, with all the personal respect which may be consistent with freedom of discussion. Among other cases forcibly put by the gentleman from Mass. why he would embark in this insipient crusade against Mussulmen, he stated this as one—that they hold human beings as property. Aye, sir, said Mr. R.—and what says the constitution of the United States on this point?—unless, indeed, that instrument is wholly to be excluded from consideration—unless it is to be regarded as a mere useless parchment, worthy to be burnt, as was once actually proposed. Does not that constitution give its sanction to the holding of human beings as property? Sir, I am not going to discuss the abstract question of liberty or slavery, or any other abstract question. I go for matters of fact. But I would ask gentlemen in this House, who have the misfortune to reside on the wrong side of a certain mysterious parallel of latitude, to take this question seriously into consideration—whether the government of the U. States is prepared to say, that the act of holding human beings as property, is sufficient to place the party so offending under the ban of its high and mighty displeasure?

Sir, the objections to this resolution accumulate upon me as I proceed—*vires acquirit eundo*. If I should attempt to go through with a statement of them all, and had strength to sustain me, I should do what I promised I would not do—I should worry and exhaust the patience of this Committee.

Sir, what are we now asked to do? To stimulate the executive to the creation of embassies. And what then? That we, or our friends, may fill them. Sir, the sending ambassadors abroad is one of the great prerogatives, if you will, of our Executive authority—and we are, I repeat, about to stimulate the President to the creation of a new, and I must be permitted to say, an unnecessary embassy—a diplomatic agency to Greece—that we, or our friends may profit by it. For, sir, it is a matter of notoriety, that all these good things are reserved for men who either have been, or are, *de facto*, members of this or of the other House. No doubt we shall be able to find some learned Theban, or some other Bæotian, willing to undertake this mission—perfectly willing to live upon the resources of the people, rather than his own. But then, said Mr. R. recurs the old fashioned question, *Cui bono*? His own, undoubtedly, but surely not that of this nation?

But, it is urged, that we have received ministers from Revolutionary France.—True, said Mr. R. we have; but what was Revolutionary France? Our own ancient and very good ally; a substantive power, if any such exists on the continent of Europe, whose independent existence no one could doubt or dispute; unless, indeed, the disciples of Berkely, who deny that there is any such thing as matter. But, sir, have the United States always received the ministers that are sent to them from foreign powers? How long did the person

who was appointed diplomatic agent here from Spain (Don Onís) linger in your anti-chambers before he was acknowledged? And is it said that the situation of Greece approaches more nearly to independence than that of Spain, when Don Onís came here as her minister? Sir, let these Greeks send a minister to us, and then we will deliberate on the question, whether we will accredit him or not. If, indeed, there was a minister of Greece knocking at the door of the President's anti-chamber for admittance, and that admittance was denied, the question of Grecian independence would be more legitimately before us; but I greatly doubt, if even that case would be sufficient to call for the interference of this House.

But, Mr. R. said, there was one aspect of this question which, to him it appeared, ought to be conclusive on the minds of all, viz: that Russia, whose designs on Turkey have been unremittingly prosecuted, ever since the days of Peter the Great, for more than a century; that Russia, allied to the Greeks in religious faith—identified in that respect—that Russia, unassailable territorially, and dividing with us (according to the gentleman from Massachusetts) the dread and apprehension of the Allied Powers—even Russia, in “juxtaposition” (to use the words of the mover of the resolution) with Turkey—even Russia dare not move. But we, who are separated first by the Atlantic Ocean, and then have to traverse the whole length of the Mediterranean sea, to arrive at the seat of conflict—we, at the distance of five thousand miles, are to interfere in this quarrel—to what purpose? To the advantage solely of this very colossal power, which has been held up as the great object of our dread, and of whom it is difficult to say, whether it is more to be dreaded for its physical force, or its detestable principles.

Permit me, sir, to ask why, in the selection of an enemy to the doctrines of our Government, and a party to those advanced by the Holy Alliance, we should fix on Turkey? She at least forms no party to that alliance; and I venture to say, that, for the last century, her conduct, in reference to her neighbors, has been much more *Christian* than that of all the “Most Christian,” “Most Catholic,” or “Most Faithful,” Majesties of Europe—for she has not interfered, as we propose to do, in the internal affairs of other nations.

But, sir, we have not done. Not satisfied with attempting to support the Greeks, one world, like that of Pyrrhus or Alexander, is not sufficient for us. We have yet another world for exploits: we are to operate in a country distant from us 80 degrees of latitude, and only accessible by a circumnavigation of the globe, and to sustain which, we must cover the Pacific with our ships, and the tops of the Andes with our soldiers. Do gentlemen seriously reflect on the work they have cut out for us? Why, sir, these projects of ambition surpass those of Bonaparte himself.

It has once been said, of the dominions of the King of Spain—thank God! it can no longer be said—that the sun never set upon them. Sir, the sun never sets on ambition like this; they who have once felt its scorpion sting, are never satisfied with a limit less than

the circle of our planet. I have heard, sir, the late corruscation in the Heavens attempted to be accounted for, by the return of the Lunar Cycle, the moon having got back into the same relative position in which she was nineteen years ago. However this may be, I am afraid, sir, that she exerts too potent an influence over our legislation, or will have done so, if we agree to adopt the resolution on your table. I think, about once in seven or eight years, for that seems to be the term of our political cycle, we may calculate upon beholding some redoubted champion—like him who prances into Westminster Hall, armed cap a pie, like Sir Somebody Dimock, at the coronation of the British King, challenging all who dispute the title to the crown—coming into this House, mounted on some magnificent project, such as this. But, sir, I never expected, that, of all places in the world, (except Salem) a proposition like this should have come from Boston.

Sir, I am afraid, that, along with some most excellent attributes and qualities—the love of liberty, jury trial, the writ of habeas corpus, and all the blessings of free government, we have derived from our Anglo Saxon ancestors, we have got not a little of their John Bull, or rather John Bull Dog spirit—their readiness to fight for anybody, and on any occasion. Sir, England has been for centuries the game cock of Europe. It is impossible to specify the wars in which she has been engaged for contrary purposes; and she will with great pleasure, see us take off her shoulders the labor of preserving the balance of power. We find her fighting, now, for the Queen of Hungary—then for her inveterate foe, the King of Prussia—now at war for the restoration of the Bourbons—and now on the eve of war with them for the liberties of Spain. These lines on the subject, were never more applicable than they have now become:

“Now Europe’s balanced—neither side prevails—
“For nothing’s left in either of the scales.”

If we pursue the same policy, we must travel the same road, and endure the same burthens, under which England now groans. But, Mr. R. said, glorious as such a design might be, a President of the United States would, in his apprehension, occupy a prouder place in history, who, when he retires from office, can say to the people who elected him, I leave you without a debt, than if he had fought as many pitched battles as Cæsar, or achieved as many naval victories as Nelson. And what, said Mr. R. is debt? In an individual, it is slavery. It is slavery of the worst sort, surpassing that of the West India Islands, for it enslaves the mind, as well as it enslaves the body; and the creature who can be abject enough to incur and to submit to it, receives in that condition of his being perhaps an adequate punishment. Of course, Mr. R. said, he spoke of debt with the exception of unavoidable misfortune. He spoke of debt caused by mismanagement, by unwarrantable generosity, by being generous before being just. Mr. R. knew that his sentiment was ridiculed by SHERIDAN; whose lamentable end was the best commentary upon its

truth. No, sir. Let us abandon these projects. Let us say to those seven millions of Greeks, "We defended ourselves, when we were but three millions, against a power, in comparison with which the Turk is but as a lamb. Go and do thou likewise." And, said Mr. R. so with respect to the governments of South America. If, after having achieved their independence, they have not valor to maintain it, I would not commit the safety and independence of this country in such a cause. I will, in both these, pursue the same line of conduct which I have ever pursued; from the day I took a seat in this House in '99, from which, without boasting, I challenge any gentleman to fix upon me any colorable charge of departure.

The condition of my strength, said Mr. R. or, rather, of my weakness, admonishes me to conclude; but I cannot sit down without remarking, that the state of the world is at this moment unexampled. We are now carrying on a piratical war against the maritime banditti of the West Indies. The bucaniers are revived. At what expense of life, of health, of treasure, that war is carried on, perhaps every member of this committee knows better than I—but, sir, to what may this resolution lead? To the investing those banditti, and the banditti of all the rest of the world, with formal commissions, which the maritime courts of every country in Europe would be bound to respect—and said Mr. R. I should not be surprised if some of the renegades, whom *we* have admitted to the privileges of citizens, or the yet more spurious offspring of our own soil, should take those commissions to cruize against our commerce. That such conduct would not be without example, the records of our courts will shew.

It is not, then, the mere power of Turkey which you are to encounter, supposing that you stop short with the original resolution. But you do not—you go further—out of the frying pan into the fire—the amendment of the gentleman from South Carolina, and the proposition of the gentleman from Kentucky, go still further—by adopting which, you will put the peace of the nation into peril—and for whom? For a people of whom we know almost as little as we do about the Greeks. Can any man in this House, say, what even is the state of society in Buenos Ayres, its moral condition, &c.

Let us, said Mr. R. adhere to the policy laid down by the second as well as the first founder of our republic—by him who was the Camillus, as well as Romulus, of the infant state—to the policy of peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none; for to entangling alliances we must come, if you once embark in policy such as this. And, with all his British predilections, Mr. R. said, he suspected he should, whenever that question should present itself, resist as strongly an alliance with Great Britain, as with any other power. We are sent here, said he, to attend to the preservation of the peace of *this* country, and not to be ready, on all occasions, to go to war whenever any thing like what, in common parlance, is termed a *turn up* takes place in Europe.

These, sir, said Mr. R. are some of the views which I have taken of the subject. There are other views of it which I might take, but

from which I abstain, (I may be permitted to say) out of self respect, as well as from respect for this Committee.

I can, however, assure the Committee, for one, that the public burdens on those whom I represent here (though they are certainly better off than those to the north and the west of them; that is, till you come to the favored states, where the interest of the public debt is paid, and where almost all the public moneys are disbursed)—their burdens, sir, are as great as they can bear, *because* their private engagements are greater than they can discharge—and, if this be not a self-evident proposition, I am at a loss to know what can be such. And this universal distress in the country has been the effect of freaks of legislation. I do not deny but there may be some who have drawn great prizes in the lottery but that is not the case with the great mass of the nation. And what is *this* scheme but a lottery? If it should end in war, there will be more great prizes to be drawn, but it will be for me and those whom I represent, to pay them. I have been acquainted with my constituents a long time, to little purpose, and have greatly mistaken their disposition and present temper of mind, if they are in any such “melting mood.” The freaks of legislation to which I have referred, the vast expenditures which begot the necessities for over-issues of paper money—that system, compared with which all the evils of Pandora’s box are blessings—have brought both England and America to this distress. The two cases are strictly parallel—they run on all fours—and, if this resolution be adopted, not merely similar, but yet more disastrous consequences will ensue.

I shall then, said Mr. R. return to my constituents without the least alarm in regard to this question. Unless, indeed, I and those who in this case think with me, have reason to fear that our constituents will award us merited censure for not having better supported the cause we advocate. Unless on this account, I cherish not the least doubt that when I, for one, go back to those who sent me here, I shall be greeted with their honest open countenances, and gratulating hands. There has not been a question, since I have been a member of this House, on which my opinion has been more clear than on this—no, not even in the case of the sedition law.

What, said Mr. R. is our situation? We are absolutely combating shadows. The gentleman would have us to believe his resolution is all but nothing—yet again it is to prove omnipotent, and fill the whole globe with its influence. Either it is nothing, or it is something. If it be nothing, let it return to its original nothingness, let us lay it on the table, and have done with it at once; but, if it is that something which it has been, on the other hand, represented to be, let us beware how we touch it. For my part, I would sooner put the shirt of Nessus on my back, than sanction these doctrines—doctrines such as I never heard from my boyhood till now. They go the whole length. If they prevail, there are no longer any Pyrenees—every bulwark and barrier of the Constitution is broken down; it is become *tabula rasa*, a *carte blanche*, for every one to scribble on it what he pleases.

SPEECH
OF
MR. RANDOLPH,
ON
Internal Improvement.

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UNITED STATES,

January 31, 1824.

Mr. RANDOLPH, of Virginia, rose. He began by saying, that he very much feared, that the indulgence extended to him by the Committee, a few days since, might induce them to think that he was, thereby, emboldened to throw himself upon their attention more frequently than was seemly or befitting, and that he should, on too many occasions, offer to their consideration the crude conceptions of his very feeble understanding. But, said he, I can, with the utmost sincerity, assure the Committee, that they may lay aside all alarm on that subject; for, I do not foresee, at this time, any further occasion, at the present session, when it will be necessary for me to trespass on their attention. I shall not again, unless some very unexpected case should arise, arouse in their breasts the feeling which such a trespass is well calculated to inspire.

During a not very short course of public life, Mr. Randolph said, he did not know that it ever had been his fortune to rise under as much embarrassment, or to address the House with as much repugnance, as he now felt. That repugnance, in part, grew out of the necessity that existed for his taking some notice, in the course of his observations, of the argument, if argument it might be called, of an honorable member of this House, from Kentucky. And, although, said Mr. Randolph, I have not the honor to know, personally, or even by name, a large portion of the members of this House, it is not necessary for me to indicate the cause of that repugnance. But this I may venture to promise the Committee, that, in my notice of the argument of that member, I shall shew, at least, as much deference to it, as *he* shewed to the Message of the President of the United States of America, on returning a bill of a nature analogous to that now before us—I say at least *as much*—I should regret if not *more*. With the argument of the President, however, Mr. Randolph said, he had nothing to do—he washed his hands of it—and would leave it to the triumph, the clemency, the mercy, of the honorable gentleman of

Kentucky—if, indeed, to use his own language, amid the mass of words in which it was enveloped, he had been able to find it. His purpose, in regard to the argument of the gentleman from Kentucky, was, to shew, that it lies in the compass of a nut-shell—that it turns on the meaning of one of the plainest words in the English language. He was happy to be able to agree with that gentleman in at least one particular, to wit: in the estimate the gentleman had formed of his own powers as a grammarian, philologist, and critic—particularly, as those powers had been displayed in the dissertation with which he had favored the Committee, on the interpretation of the word *establish*.

“Congress,” says the Constitution, “shall have power to *establish* [ergo, says the gentleman, Congress shall have power to *construct*!] Post Roads.”

One would suppose, said Mr. Randolph, that, if any thing could be considered as settled, by precedent in legislation, the meaning of the words of the Constitution must, before this time, have been settled, by the uniform sense in which that power has been exercised, from the commencement of the Government to the present time. What is the fact? Your statute book is loaded with acts for the “establishment” of post roads—and the Postmaster General is besieged with petitions, for the “establishment” of Post Offices. And yet, we are now gravely debating on what the word “establish” shall be held to mean! A curious predicament we are placed in—precisely the reverse of that of Moliere’s citizen turned gentleman, who discovered, to his great surprize, that he had been talking “prose” all his life long, without knowing it—a common case—it is just so with all printers, and I hope I may not exemplify it in this instance. But, sir, *we* have been, for five-and-thirty years, establishing post-roads, under the delusion that we were exercising a power specially conferred upon us by the constitution, while we were, according to the suggestion of the gentleman from Kentucky, actually committing *treason*, by refusing, for so long a time, to carry into effect that very article of the Constitution!

To forbear the exercise of a power vested in us for the public good, not merely for our own aggrandizement, is, according to the argument of the gentleman from Kentucky, treachery to the Constitution! I, then, said Mr. Randolph, must have commenced my public life in treason, and in treason am I doomed to end it. One of the first votes that I ever had the honor to give, in this House, was a vote against the *establishment*, if gentlemen please, of a uniform system of bankruptcy—a power as unquestionably given to Congress, by the Constitution, as the power to lay a direct tax. But, sir, my treason did not end there. About two years after the establishment of this uniform system of bankruptcy, I was *particeps criminis*, with almost the unanimous voice of this House, in committing another act of treachery in repealing it; and Mr. Jefferson, the President of the United States, in the commencement of his career, consummated the treason by putting his signature to the act of repeal.

Miserable, indeed, would be the condition of every free people, if, in expounding the charter of their liberties, it were necessary to go back to the Anglo-Saxon, to Junius and Skinner, and other black letter etymologists. Not, sir, that I am very skilful in language: although I have learned from a certain Curate of Brentford, whose name will survive when the whole contemporaneous bench of Bishops shall be buried in oblivion, that *words*—the counters of wise men, the money of fools—that it is by the dextrous cutting, and shuffling of this pack, that is derived one-half of the chicanery, and more than one-half of the profits, of the most lucrative profession in the world—and, sir, by this dextrous exchanging, and substituting of words, we shall not be the first nation in the world which has been cajoled, if we are to be cajoled, out of our rights and liberties.

In the course of the observations which the gentleman from Kentucky saw fit to submit to the Committee, were some pathetic ejaculations on the subject of the sufferings of our brethren of the West: Sir, our brethren of the West have suffered, as our brethren throughout the United States, from the same cause, although with them the cause exists in an aggravated degree—from the acts of those to whom they have confided the power of legislation; by a departure—and we have all suffered from it—I hope no gentleman will understand me, as wishing to make any invidious comparisons between different quarters of our country—by a departure from the industry, the simplicity, the economy, and the frugality, of our ancestors. They have suffered from a greediness of gain, that has grasped at the shadow while it has lost the substance—from habits of indolence, of profusion, of extravagance—from an apery of foreign manners, and of foreign fashions—from a miserable attempt at the shabby genteel, which only serves to make our poverty more conspicuous. The way to remedy this state of suffering, is, to return to those habits of labor, and industry, from which we have thus departed.

But, said Mr. R. we have been asked, if, by some convulsion of nature, this Government should be suddenly destroyed, and should pass away, “like the baseless fabric of a vision, and leave not a rack behind,” what monument would remain of the benefits derived from it in the West—in other words, what have we done for the West? Sir, let me reverse the question. What have we *not* done for the West? Do gentlemen want monuments? Unless the art of printing should be lost, posterity may find them in your statute books, and in the journals of this House. They may find them in Indian treaties for the extinguishment of title to lands—in grants of land, the effects of which begin now to be felt in Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee; as they have long been severely felt in Maryland, Carolina, and Virginia: they will find them in laws granting every facility for the nominal payment—and, he might almost say, for the spunging, of the debts due this Government, by purchasers of the public lands—in the grants, which cannot be found in the older states, for the establishment of schools, and for other great objects of public concernment, for which nothing has been given to the states of the East. In

a word, they would find them in the millions which this nation has disbursed, and is now disbursing, for the acquisition of the navigation of the Mississippi, and for the purchase of Louisiana. If these be nothing, said Mr. R. then indeed we have done nothing for the West. It is true, sir, that these things were done when the names of more than one who now figure on this floor, had not been heard of out of their own parish. In a word, without speaking this in any invidious spirit: without the remotest intention of twitting our Western brethren with what we have done for them, I have stated some of the benefits conferred on the West, for the purpose of repressing the spirit of discontent, which, beginning at home, never fails to lay hold upon any external object with which it meets as an excuse for complaining. I will not add, Mr. Chairman—from Washington to Milledgeville—for *this* part of the country, what has been done?

With these few remarks, continued Mr. R. permit me now to recal the attention of the committee to the original design of this Government. It grew out of the necessity, indispensable and unavoidable, in the circumstances of this country, of some general power, capable of regulating foreign commerce. Sir, I am old enough to remember the origin of this Government; and, though I was too young to participate in the transactions of that day, I have a perfect recollection of what was public sentiment on the subject. And I repeat, without fear of contradiction, that the proximate, as well as the remote cause of the existence of the Federal Government, was, the regulation of foreign commerce. Not to particularize all the difficulties which grew out of the conflicting laws of the states, Mr. R. referred to but one, arising from Virginia taxing an article which Maryland then made duty-free; and to that very policy, said he, may be attributed, in a great degree, the rapid growth and prosperity of the town of Baltimore. If the old Congress had possessed the power of laying a duty of ten per cent. ad valorem on imports, this constitution would never have been called into existence.

But we are told that, along with the regulation of foreign commerce, the states have yielded to the General Government, in as broad terms, the regulation of domestic commerce—I mean, said Mr. R. the commerce among the several states—and that the same power is possessed by Congress over the one as over the other. It is rather unfortunate for this argument, that, if it applies to the extent to which the power to regulate foreign commerce has been carried by Congress, they may prohibit, altogether, this domestic commerce, as they have heretofore, under the other power, prohibited foreign commerce.

But why put extreme cases? This Government cannot go on one day without a mutual understanding and deference between the State and General Governments. This Government is the breath of the nostrils of the states. Gentlemen may say what they please of the preamble to the constitution; but this constitution is not the work of the amalgamated population of the then existing confederacy, but the offspring of the states; and however high we may carry our heads,

and strut and fret our hour, "dressed in a little brief authority," it is in the power of the states to extinguish this Government at a blow. They have only to refuse to send members to the other branch of the Legislature, or to appoint Electors of President and Vice President, and the thing is done. I hope gentlemen will not understand me as seeking for reflections of this kind—but, like Falstaff's rebellion—I mean Worcester's rebellion, they lay in my way, and I found them.

But, we are asked, what if little Delaware should erect her back, or New Jersey, and should undertake to stop the transportation of the United States' mail? It would be something very like the attempt virtually made by another state, during the late war, or an attempt to stop the transit of the U. S. troops through the territory of a state. And this brings me to another branch of the subject, on which, in my discursive way, I mean to touch. I recollect once to have heard, from a gentleman from Kentucky, the power to re-charter the old Bank of the United States, called a "vagrant power," seeking through the different clauses of the constitution where to fix itself; but, like a man in Kentucky seeking for his land, found the ground shingled over with warrants. Now, said Mr. R. *this* vagrant power (of making roads and canals) after being whipt from parish to parish, is, at last, seeking a settlement under the war-making power. And under this power to make war, sir, what may we not do? Quarter troops upon you—burn your house, sir, or mine—burn your own ships, and your navy yards, that the enemy may not have the pleasure of doing it. But would any man contend that, in time of peace, all the incidents to the war-making power take effect? I have always understood, said Mr. R. that *inter arma silent leges*—and a man might as well bring an action against the hero of New Orleans—yes, sir, the hero of New Orleans, if I may call him so—by an action of trespass *quare clausum fregit*, when he marched down to the beach, and gave the enemy a foretaste of what he gave them thereafter—a man might as well do that, as, in time of peace, sustain the power of the same hero—not, sir, that I impute the assumption of it to him—of doing all the things which he might rightfully do in a time of war. When, Mr. R. said, he considered this war-making power, and the money-raising power, and suffered himself to reflect on the length to which they go, he felt ready to acknowledge that, in yielding these, the states have yielded every thing. The last words of Patrick Henry on this subject, though uttered five and twenty years ago, were now ringing in his ears. If gentlemen will come fairly out, said Mr. R. and tell us, You have given us the power of the purse and of the sword, and these two enable us to take whatever else we may want, we shall understand them. Thank God, however, *that* has not *yet* become the construction of the constitution.

I am sorry to say, because I should be the last man in the world to disturb the repose of a venerable man, to whom I wish a quiet end of his honorable life—that all the difficulties under which we have labored, and now labor, on this subject, have grown out of a fatal admission, by one of the late Presidents of the United States—an ad-

mission which runs, counter to the tenor of his whole political life, and is expressly contradicted by one of the most luminous and able state papers that ever was written, the offspring of his pen—an admission which gave a sanction to the principle, that this Government had the power to charter, the present colossal Bank of the United States. Sir, said Mr. R. that act, and one other, which I will not name, bring forcibly home to my mind a train of melancholy reflections on the miserable state of our mortal being.

“In life’s last scenes, what prodigies surprise!

“Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise.

“From Marlborough’s eyes, the streams of dotage flow;

“And Swift expires a driv’ler and a show.”

Such is the state of the case, Sir. It is miserable to think of it—and we have nothing left to us but to weep over it.

We have been told, sir, by my friend from New Jersey, over the way, that the framers of the constitution foresaw the raising up of some new sects, which were to construe the powers of the government differently from their intention; and, therefore, the clause granting a general power to make all laws that might be necessary and proper to carry the granted powers into effect, was inserted in that Constitution. Yes, said Mr. R. such a sect did arise some twenty odd years ago—and, unfortunately, I had the honor to be a member of that church. From the commencement of the government to this day, differences have arisen between the two great parties in this nation—one consisting of the disciples of Mr. HAMILTON, the Secretary of the Treasury, and another party who believed that, in their construction of the constitution, those to whom they opposed themselves exceeded the just limit of its legitimate authority—and Mr. R. prayed gentlemen to take into their most serious consideration the fact, that, on this very question of construction, this sect, which the framers of the constitution foresaw might arise, did arise in their might, and put down the construction of the constitution according to the Hamiltonian version. But did we at that day dream, said Mr. R. that a new sect would arise after them, which would as far transcend Alexander Hamilton and his disciples, as they out-went Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and John Taylor, of Caroline? This is the deplorable fact: such is now the actual state of things in this land; and it is not a subject so much of demonstration as it is self-evident—it speaks to the senses, so that every one may understand it. On the occasion of that great strife, Mr. JEFFERSON, then Vice President of the United States, drew, and sent to Kentucky, to be moved by the eminent and worthy man who was afterwards his Attorney General, those celebrated resolutions, generally called *the Kentucky Resolutions*. These were followed by another set of resolutions, which were called *John Taylor’s Resolutions*, but which we now, by the public declaration of Mr. TAYLOR, under his own hand, know were drawn up by Mr. MADISON. These gave rise to that very able and masterly Report of the Massachusetts General Court, sus-

taining the constitutionality of the Alien and Sedition Laws. Yes, sir, it was a very able report—and here permit me to say I have not heard a shadow of an argument on this floor—and I do not expect to hear it, because it is unsusceptible of it—as forcible, as strong, in support of the power now claimed for this House, as is the argument of the Legislature of Massachusetts in support of the Alien and Sedition Laws—and I say that if you can *enact* this bill, you can *re-enact* the Alien and Sedition Laws—not, sir, that I am at all afraid of their re-enactment now—they who burnt their fingers with the Sedition Law have learnt lessons from experience, and so have those who have had their example before their eyes. For, we learn from high authority here, that, notwithstanding the representations of “venal and hireling presses” to the contrary, the country is in great distress—by which we are to understand, that means have been taken to use the press here, like the bayonet beyond the water, for the support of *legitimate* authority. No sir, I am not afraid of the enactment of the Sedition Law; there is now no occasion to defend ourselves by such a measure, against the idle bark of every unnecessary cur in the Republic. But, Mr. R. said, he recollected when this vagrant power was first detected by this new sect, like an insect feeling for the soft and pulpy parts of the body politic, &c.

I remember to have heard it said, elsewhere, said Mr. R. that “when gentlemen talked of precedent, they forgot they were not in Westminster Hall.” Whatever trespass, said he, I may be guilty of upon the attention of the Committee, one thing I will promise them, and will faithfully perform my promise—I will dole out to them no political metaphysics. Sir, I unlearned metaphysics almost as early as Fontenelle, and he tells us, I think, it was at nine years old. I shall say nothing about that word *municipal*. I am almost as sick of it as honest Jack Falstaff was of “security”—it has been like ratsbane in my mouth, ever since the late Ruler of France took shelter under that word, to pocket our money, and incarcerate our persons, with the most profound respect for our *neutral* rights. I have done with the word *municipal* ever since that day. Let us come to the plain common-sense construction of the Constitution. Sir, we live under a government of a peculiar structure, to which the doctrines of the European writers on civil polity do not apply—and when gentlemen get up and quote Vattel, as applicable to the powers of the Congress of the United States, I should as soon have expected them to quote Aristotle or the Koran. Our government is not like the consolidated monarchies of the old world—it is a solar system, an *imperium in imperio*: and, when the question is about the one or the other, what belongs to the *imperium* and what to the *imperio*, we gain nothing by referring to Vattel. He treats of an integral government, a compact structure—*totus teres atque rotundus*. But ours is a system composed of two distinct governments—the one general in its nature, the other internal. Now, sir, a government may be admirable for external, and yet execrable for internal purposes. And when the question of power in the government arises, this is the problem

which every honest man has to work. The powers of government are divided, in our system, between the general and state governments, except some powers, which the People have very wisely retained to themselves. With these exceptions, all the power is divided between the two governments. The given power will not lie, unless, as in the case of direct taxes, the power is specifically given—and even then, the states have a concurrent power. The question for every honest man to ask himself, is, to which of these two divisions of government does the power in contest belong. And, said Mr. R. while I am on the subject of assumed power, permit me to say, that, if my strength allows me, I shall be compelled to state some acts of assumption and usurpation on the part of the states, as well as on the part of the general government: not that I at all agree with the gentleman from New-York, (Mr. Storrs,) that the danger of this government is from the state governments—nor can I imitate, while I greatly admire the generosity with which that gentleman, a representative from the largest state in the Union, would shear her of her strength—to do what? To preserve this union? No. To reduce her to a level, by possibility, with the smallest state in the Union. And this, sir, reminds me of one other of the *nothings* we have done for the Western Country. We have, among other nothings, given them, in case of an election of President coming into this House, nine votes out of twenty-four. We have erected them, as soon as their numbers would render it possible, under the law, into independent states, and thus given them, in the other branch of the legislature, a voice to weigh down the voice, or counterpoise it, of New York or Pennsylvania. These are among the nothings we have done for them. This, then, is the problem we have to settle: Does this power of internal improvement belong to the general or to the state governments, or is it a concurrent power? Gentlemen say we have power, by the Constitution, to establish post roads, and, having established post roads, we should be much obliged to you to allow us, therefore, the power to construct the roads and canals into the bargain. If I had the physical strength, said Mr. R. I could easily demonstrate to the Committee; that, supposing the power to exist on our part—of all the powers that can be exercised by this House, there is no power that would be more susceptible of abuse than this very power. Figure to yourself, said he, a committee of this House determining on some road, and giving out the contracts to the members of both Houses of Congress, or to their friends, &c. Sir, if I had strength, I could shew to this committee that the Asiatic plunder of Leadenhall street has not been more corrupting to the British government than the exercise of such a power as this would prove to us.

The gentleman from New York, (Mr. Storrs) says that Congress possesses the power to coin money, and asks if that does not involve a jurisdiction over the whole subject of money. It does, sir; and yet I would, by the bye, correct one mistake into which that gentleman alone has not fallen. In what does that power consist? In designating the metal, determining the rate of alloy, fixing the weight, di-

recting the impress, and declaring the value of the coin—not in the mechanical act of coining. And if all our coin were struck by Watt & Bolton at Birmingham, the coinage would be as much an act of sovereignty, if it had due weight and the proper assay, &c. as if it were coined at the mint in Philadelphia. But, sir, under this power, what have we done? We have erected a bank, which will not redeem the notes of its branches, and the states are deluged with spurious bank paper, while with this base currency throughout the land, debtors are bound to pay in specie. Sir, the bank-note-table of New York, in which they do not deign to name the banks of Kentucky, is a politico-economical curiosity; and, instead of one currency of uniform value, we have a thousand different kinds of base money, by ringing the changes upon which, we hear the profits which brokers and shavers and stock jobbers levy on the honest industry of the nation. I said, continued Mr. R. that this government, if put to the test—a test it is by no means calculated to endure—as a government for the management of the internal concerns of this country, is one of the worst that can be conceived—which is determined by the fact, that it is a government not having a common feeling and common interest with the governed. I know said he, that we are told—and it is the first time that the doctrine has been openly avowed—that, upon the responsibility of this House to the People, by means of the elective franchise, depends all the security of the People of the United States against the abuse of the powers of this government. But, sir, how shall a man from Mackinaw or the Yellow Stone River, respond to the sentiments of the people who live in New Hampshire? It is as great a mockery—a greater mockery than it was to talk to these colonies about their virtual representation in the British Parliament. I have no hesitation in saying that the liberties of the Colonies were safer in the custody of the British Parliament than they will be in any portion of this country, if all the powers of the States, as well as those of the General Government, are devolved on this House; and in this opinion I am borne out, and more than borne out, by the authority of Patrick Henry himself.

But the gentleman from New York, and some others who have spoken on this occasion, say, What! shall we be startled by a shadow? Shall we recoil from taking a power clearly within—(what?)—our reach? Shall we not clutch the sceptre—the air-drawn sceptre, that invites our hand, because of the fears and alarms of the gentlemen from Virginia? Sir, if I cannot give reason to the committee, they shall at least have authority. THOMAS JEFFERSON, then in the vigor of his intellect, was one of the persons who denied the existence of such powers. JAMES MADISON was another. He, in that masterly and unrivalled report in the Legislature of Virginia, which is worthy to be the text book of every American Statesman, has settled this question. For me to attempt to add any thing to the arguments of that paper, would be to attempt to gild refined gold—to paint the lilly—to throw a perfume on the violet—to smooth the ice—or add another hue unto the rainbow—in every aspect of it, waste-

ful and ridiculous excess. Neither will I hold up my farthing rush-light to the blaze of that meridian sun. But sir, I cannot but deplore, and to my dying day I shall deplore—my heart aches when I think of it—that the hand which erected that monument of political wisdom should have signed the act to incorporate the present Bank of the United States.

It was not a matter of conjecture, merely, Mr. R. said, but of fact—of notoriety, that there does exist on this subject an honest difference of opinion among enlightened men; that not one or two, but many states in the Union see with great concern and alarm the encroachments of the General Government on their authority. They feel that they have given up the power of the purse and the sword, and enabled men, with the purse in one hand and the sword in the other, to rifle them of all that they hold dear. Among the reveries of that strange and most extraordinary man, the late ruler of France, while he was dying, inch by inch, among the rats of St. Helena, he expressed the thought, that, if instead of Elba, he had chosen Corsica as the place of his retreat, when he was driven by the Allies out of France, he would have been enabled, from the bravery and devotion of the people, and the mountainous passes of the country, &c. to hold it against the combined powers of Europe—as if a man who could not keep France, could keep any thing else. And we too, sir, now begin to perceive what we have surrendered—that, having given up the power of the purse and the sword, every thing else is at the mercy and forbearance of the General Government. We did believe there were some parchment barriers—no! what is worth all the parchment barriers in the world—that there was, in the powers of the States, some counterpoise to the power of this body: but, if this bill passes, we can believe so no longer.

I have mentioned Bonaparte—and, perhaps history cannot afford another example of such a rise, and of such a fall. We see him giving law in the Kremlin, in the ancient palace of the Muscovite Czars—in three years we see him in the island of St. Helena, enduring—I will not say what. With that example of humiliation before me, it costs me nothing to endure the triumph of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, (Mr. Hemphill,) who tells us that a new era is approaching—(not the era of good feeling, I am afraid, for that has come already,)—in which all Presidential squeamishness is to be at an end—when this Government shall enter on a new course, and we are to take a new latitude and departure. With this example before me, I must recall the recollection of three-and-twenty years ago, when that gentleman, who is the father of the present bill, was upholding, or, rather, endeavoring to uphold, the wreck and remnant of that system of policy which its triumphant adversaries had cloven down. I remember his exertions in regard to what has been called the midnight Judiciary. Sir, at that time, I stood, in relation to this House, and to that gentleman, in a station very different from that which I now sustain, or ever expect—or, if I know myself, would ever wish, to occupy again. If that era arrives, to which the hopes, and wishes

of the gentleman seem to aspire, it is a pity we have not some Dryden to celebrate its advent. Another *Astræa redux* will be hailed—and we shall once more listen to the strain,

“Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia Regna.”

Sir, if this bill passes, we shall not only have a midnight, but a day-light, and star-light, judiciary bill. You will have what one of—I was going to say, (I must not call him so, but I will—I know not what else to call him,) the most violent Federalist I ever heard, once said, we ought to have—federal justices of the peace. For, you are told, that all the power that is claimed for Congress over roads, is a conservative power—that if robberies, (except of the mail,) or murders, are committed, or contracts are made on a road belonging to the United States, they will fall under the cognizance, and jurisdiction, of the STATE Government. Sir, I am no lawyer; but this is the first time that I ever heard, that the effect of contracts was limited to the place of signature. I always have heard that they were, in their nature, transitive. But, sir, suppose the power to be conservative only—and suppose some breach is made in the road, or any other injury done to it, are you not to punish that injury? And, if any thing of a trespass is committed on this road, are you to haul a man all the way from the extreme verge of the largest states in the Union—for he must be tried in the Federal Court, and not in a court of the state—to answer for having thrown a pebble in the road? and then, if aggrieved by the decision of the court, is he to be left to the remedy of coming here, to the Supreme Court, for his appeal?

But, sir, it is said we have a right to establish post offices and post roads, and we have a right to regulate commerce between the several states: and it is argued that “to regulate” commerce, is to prescribe the way in which it shall be carried on—which gives, by a *liberal* construction, the power to *construct* the way, that is, the roads and canals on which it is to be carried! Sir, since the days of that unfortunate man, of the German coast, whose name was originally Fyerstein, Anglicised to Firestone, but got, by translation, from that to Flint, from Flint to Pierre-a-Fusil, and from Pierre-a-Fusil to Peter Gun—never was greater violence done the English language, than by the construction, that, under the power to prescribe the way in which commerce shall be carried on, we have the right to construct the way on which it is to be carried. Are gentlemen aware of the colossal power they are giving to the General Government? Sir, I am afraid, that that ingenious gentleman, Mr. McAdam, will have to give up his title to the distinction of the *Colossus of Roads*, and surrender it to some of the gentlemen of this committee, if they succeed in their efforts on this occasion. If, indeed, we have the power which is contended for by gentlemen under that clause of the constitution which relates to the regulation of commerce among the several states, we may, under the same power, *prohibit*, altogether, the commerce between the states, or any portion of the states—or we

may declare that it shall be carried on only in a particular way, by a particular road, or through a particular canal; or we may say to the people of a particular district, you shall only carry your produce to market through our canals, or over our roads, and then, by tolls, imposed upon them, we may acquire power to extend the same blessings, and privileges, to other districts of the country. Nay, we may go further. We may take it into our heads—Have we not the power to provide and maintain a navy? What is more necessary to a navy than seamen to man it? And the great nursery of our seamen is (besides fisheries) the coasting trade—we may take it into our heads, that those monstrous lumbering wagons that now traverse the country between Philadelphia and Pittsburg, stand in the way of the raising of seamen, and may declare that no communication shall be held between these points but coastwise: we may specify some particular article in which alone trade shall be carried on. And, sir, if, contrary to all expectation, the ascendancy of Virginia, in the general government, should again be established, it may be declared that coal shall be carried in no other way than coastwise, &c. Sir, there is no end to the purposes that may be effected under such constructions of power. I here beg of gentlemen to recollect—I particularly call upon the very few members of this House, who happen to be interested in the navigation of the River on which I reside, (the Roanoke,) to say, whether, after we have, with many efforts and a great expense, with the loss of at least half of our capital, effected the navigation of that river, it would be competent to this government to seize upon our feeders, to assume jurisdiction of Lake Drummond, &c. and, for the accomplishment of some wild scheme—not more preposterous and ridiculous than some others I could name—drain the waters of that Lake into the Atlantic ocean, and abolish our canal. If we should chance to encounter the displeasure of the government, under these constructions of power, they may say to every wagoner in North Carolina, you shall not carry on any commerce across the Virginia line, in wagons or carts, because I have some other object to answer, by a suppression of that trade. Are gentlemen prepared for this?

There is one other power, said Mr. R. which may be exercised, in case the power now contended for be conceded, to which I ask the attention of every gentleman who happens to stand in the same unfortunate predicament with myself—of every man who has the misfortune to be, and to have been born, a slave-holder. If Congress possess the power to do what is proposed by this bill, they may not only enact a sedition law—for there is precedent—but they may emancipate every slave in the United States—and with stronger color of reason than they can exercise the power now contended for. And where will they find the power? They may follow the example of the gentlemen who have preceded me, and hook the power upon the first loop they find in the constitution: they might take the preamble—perhaps the war making power—or they might take a greater sweep, and say, with some gentlemen, that it is not to be found in this or that of the granted powers, but results from all of them—

which is not only a dangerous, but *the most* dangerous doctrine. Was it not demonstrable, Mr. R. asked, that slave labor is the dearest in the world—and that the existence of a large body of slaves is a source of danger? Suppose we are at war with a foreign power, and freedom should be offered them by Congress as an inducement to them to take a part in it—or suppose the country not at war, at every turn of this federal machine, at every successive census, that interest will find itself governed by another and increasing power, which is bound to it, neither by any common tie of interest or feeling. And, if ever the time shall arrive, as assuredly it has arrived elsewhere, and, in all probability, may arrive here, that a coalition of knavery and fanaticism shall, for any purpose, be got up on this floor, I ask gentlemen, who stand in the same predicament as I do, to look well to what they are now doing—to the colossal power with which they are now arming this government. The power to do what I allude to is, I aver, more honestly inferrible from the war-making power, than the power we are now about to exercise. Let them look forward to the time when such a question shall arise, and tremble with me at the thought that that question is to be decided by a majority of the votes of this House, of whom not one possesses the slightest tie of common interest or of common feeling with us.

When, on a late occasion, it was proposed to this House to give a grant of some ninety pounds, lawful money, to rock the cradle of declining age, to smooth the pillow of an ancient gentlewoman, the mother of a race of heroes—a race to whom some of us seem to have a constitutional and instinctive antipathy—we have been met with a cry of danger to the constitution! of danger to the liberties of the country! But, when it is proposed to draw the last shilling from the pockets of honest industry, to be laid out, as from the very nature of the thing it must be laid out, in jobs, and contracts, and corruption—and if you will trace the execution of all your projects—the Rip Rap, or others, you will find the process is the same in all—you are told that in making roads and digging canals, and spending millions upon them, you are promoting the honor, and interest, and grandeur of the country! And this, Mr. Chairman, for fear that the states, which are all clamorous, burdening your table with daily petitions, to get you to extend your post routes through all the States and Territories, should undertake to stop the passage of the United States' mail! Why, sir, if we suppose a case like this, we may suppose a universal madness seizing on the whole population of the country, and argue from that supposition.

And this brings me, said Mr. R. to notice an admission, as it has been called, of my worthy colleague, of the power of *altering* post roads, after they are established. I cannot understand this as gentlemen appear to do, and I know that my colleague is not correctly so understood. Sir, in the state, one of whose representatives I am, I don't know a single post route that has not been changed from what it was when established as a post road by the statute. Why, sir, you will not, at this moment, on the mail route from the capital of the

United States to the capital of Virginia, travel for the first twenty miles on a single inch of the road as it existed when that mail route was first established. What follows from the doctrine of gentlemen on this subject? Why, that if Virginia should do what she ought to do—make a good road between the two points referred to—the mail is yet to continue to go, as now, plunging through the worse than Serbonian bogs, between the Neabsco and Chapawamsic, and we shall do it, because it is treason—not by the Constitution of the United States, to be sure, but about as pretty a case of constructive treason, as a latitudinarian judge could desire to see on a summer's day, to alter a post road. From the doctrines now advanced on this floor, it follows, that every mile that a post route is changed, whether for the better or worse, the powers of government are impugned; and (*nullum tempus occurrit regi*), we do not know what a mass of criminality may not have been incurred, and very innocently incurred, because never, till now, had our people a preceptor learned enough to instruct them in the true meaning of the word “establish.”

After a short pause, Mr. R. said, it was to him a matter of painful reflection how utterly inadequate he felt himself to say *what* he intended to have said, and still more *as* he intended to say it. But, before I sit down, said Mr. R. permit me to put it to the candor even of those Members of this House who differ from me respecting the constitutionality of the power now claimed, to say what there is in *any* state of this nation, at this particular juncture, that calls for the immediate exercise of this power, supposing it to be possessed.

The honorable gentleman from Delaware tells us we have power to purchase stock, and thus promote objects of internal improvement, where they are commenced by the states or by individual enterprise. Sir, if we have money to spare, let me advise the gentleman, who is chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, to begin with buying our own stock. We can do nothing better with our money than buy our own bonds. I have known many speculators leave their own debts unpaid, to purchase the property of others; but I never knew one of them to come to good. Let us discharge our war debt, and no longer put off the payment of it by shuffling evasions, under pretence of a change of stock. Individuals, not inferior to any in the country, and some of the great states too, also entertain serious doubts of the power of Congress, to pass this bill. I should wish, in the course of future discussion, that some gentleman would show the urgency of the occasion to make the plunge at this moment. Are there not already causes enough of jealousy and discord existing among us? Is this the most auspicious time to set up a new construction of the Constitution? Is this the most auspicious time for the exercise of the assumption of a power which the gentleman from New-York, with his usual perspicacity, so clearly sees we possess, but which Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison, and others of at least equal authority with the gentleman from New-York, as clearly see we do not possess? Is this a time to increase those jealousies between different quarters of the country, already sufficiently apparent?

I intended, said Mr. R. to have managed this subject in a different manner; but the exhaustion of both bodily and mental powers calls on me to do what I ought to have done long ago—to draw these remarks to a close. But it is too late in the day for me to speak for reputation. Whatever is to be the fate of this bill—whether this splendid project shall or shall not go into operation now, or be reserved for the new reign, the approach of which is hailed with so much pleasure, my place must be either in the obscurity of private life, or in the thankless and profitless employment of attempting to uphold the rights of the States, and of the People, so long as I can stand—more especially the rights of my native State, the land of my sires, which, although I be among the least worthy or least favored of her sons, and although she may allot to me a step-son's portion—I will uphold, so long as I live.

Let us, then, I repeat, Mr. Chairman, pay our debts, personal and public; let us leave the profits of labor in the pockets of the people, to rid them of that private embarrassment under which they so extensively suffer, and apply every shilling of the revenue, not indispensable to the exigencies of the government, to the faithful discharge of the public debt, before we engage in any new schemes of lavish expenditure. Sir, we have already paid more interest on the 3 per cent. stock, than the amount of the whole principal of that debt at nominal par.

Should this bill pass, one more measure only requires to be consummated; and then we, who belong to that unfortunate portion of this confederacy which is south of Mason and Dixon's line, and east of the Alleghany Mountains, have to make up our mind to perish like so many mice in a receiver of mephitic gas, under the experiments of a set of new political chemists; or we must resort to the measures, which we first opposed to British aggressions and usurpations—to maintain that independence which the valor of our fathers acquired, but which is every day sliding from under our feet. I beseech all those gentlemen who come from that portion of the Union, to take into serious consideration, whether they are not, by the passage of this bill, precipitately, at least without urgent occasion, now arming the General Government with powers hitherto unknown—under which we shall become, what the miserable proprietors of Jamaica and Barbadoes are to their English mortgagees, mere stewards—sentinels—managers of slave labor—we ourselves retaining, on a footing with the slave of the West Indies, just enough of the product of our estates to support life, while all the profits go with the course of the Gulf stream. Sir, this is a state of things that cannot last. If it shall continue with accumulated pressure, we must oppose to it associations, and every other means short of actual insurrection. We must begin to construe the Constitution like those who treat it as a bill of indictment, in which they are anxious to pick a flaw—we shall keep on the windward side of treason—but we must combine to resist, and that effectually, these encroachments, or the little upon which we now barely subsist will be taken from us. With these observations, Mr. R. abandoned the question to its fate.

SPEECH OF MR. RANDOLPH,

ON THE

Tariff Bill,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 15, 1824.

Mr. RANDOLPH, of Virginia, addressed the chair. I am, said he, practising no deception upon myself, much less upon the House, when I say, that, if I had consulted my own feelings and inclinations, I should not have troubled the House, exhausted as it is, and as I am, with any further remarks upon this subject. I come to the discharge of this task, not merely with reluctance, but with disgust; jaded, worn down, abraded, I may say, as I am by long attendance upon this body, and continued stretch of the attention upon this subject. I come to it, however, at the suggestion, and in pursuance of the wishes of those, whose wishes are to me, in all matters touching my public duty, paramount law; I speak with those reservations, of course, which every moral agent must be supposed to make to himself.

It was not more to his surprise, than to his disappointment, Mr. R. said, that, on his return to the House, after a necessary absence of a few days, on indispensable business, he found it engaged in discussing the general principle of the bill, when its details were under consideration. If he had expected such a turn in the debate, he would, at any private sacrifice, however great, have remained a spectator and auditor of that discussion. With the exception of the speech, already published, of his worthy colleague on his right (Mr. P. P. Barbour,) Mr. R. said, he was nearly deprived of the benefit of the discussion which had taken place. Many weeks had been occupied with this bill (he hoped the House would pardon him for saying so,) before he took the slightest part in the deliberations on the details, and he now sincerely regretted that he had not had firmness enough to adhere to the resolution which he had laid down to himself in the early stage of the debate, not to take any part in the discussion of the details of the measure.* But, as he trusted, what he now had to say upon this subject, although more and better things had been said by others, might not be the same that they had said, or might

* By so doing, many of Mr. R.'s strongest objections to the bill were in a manner dissipated, there being no report of these skirmishes. Some of them, with which he thought it indecent again to trouble the House, will be found (substantially) appended to this speech.

not be said in the same manner; he here borrowed the language of a man who had been heretofore conspicuous in the councils of the country; of one who was unrivalled for readiness and dexterity in debate; who was long without an equal on the floor of this body; who had contributed as much to the revolution of 1801, as any man in this nation,* and had derived as little benefit from it;—as, to use the words of that celebrated man, what he had to say was not that which had been said by others, and would not be said in their manner, the House would, he trusted, have patience with him during the short time that his strength would allow him to occupy their attention. And he begged them to understand, that the notes which he held in his hand were not notes on which *he* meant to speak, but of what others had spoken, and from which he would make the smallest selection in his power.

Here permit me to say, observed Mr. R. that I am obliged, and with great reluctance, to differ from my worthy colleague, who has taken so conspicuous a part in this debate, about one fact, which I will call to his recollection: for I am sure it was in his memory, though sleeping. He has undertaken to state the causes by which the difference in the relative condition of various parts of the Union has been produced: but, my worthy colleague has omitted to state the *primum mobile* of the commerce and manufactures to which a portion of the country that I need not name, owes its present prosperity and wealth. That *primum mobile* was southern capital. I speak now not of transactions *quorum pars minima fui*, but of things of which, nevertheless, I have a contemporaneous recollection. I say, without the fear of contradiction, then, that, in consequence of the enormous depreciation of the evidences of the public debt of this country—the debt proper of the United States (to which must be added an item of not less than twenty millions of dollars, for the state debts assumed by the United States,) being bought up and almost engrossed by the people of what were then called the northern states—a measure which nobody dreamt any thing about, or which nobody had the slightest suspicion—I mean the assumption of the state debts by the federal government—these debts being bought up for a mere song, a capital of eighty millions of dollars, or, in other words, a credit to that amount, bearing an interest of six per cent. per annum (with the exception of nineteen millions (the interest of that debt,) which bore an interest of *three* per cent.) (See note 2, *Appendix*,)—a capital of eighty millions of dollars was poured, in a single day, into the coffers of the north: and to *that* cause we may mainly ascribe the difference, so disastrous to the south, between that country and the other portion of this Union, to which I have alluded. When we, said Mr. R. roused by the sufferings of our brethren of Boston, entered into the contest with the mother country, and when we came out of it—when this constitution was adopted, *we* were comparatively rich; *they* were positively poor. What is now our relative situation?

* See Note 1, Appendix.

They are flourishing and rich: We are tributary to them, not only through the medium of the public debt of which I have spoken, but also through the medium of the pension list, nearly the whole amount of which is disbursed in the eastern states—and to this creation of a day is to be ascribed the difference of our relative situation, (I hope my worthy colleague will not consider any thing that I say as conflicting with his general principles, to which I heartily subscribe.) (*Note 3 of Appendix.*)—Yes, sir; and the price paid for the creation of all that portion of this capital, which consisted of the assumed debts of the states, was the *immense* boon of fixing the seat of government where it now is. And I advert to this bargain, because I wish to shew to every member of this House, and, if it were possible, to every individual of this nation, the most tremendous and calamitous results of political bargaining.

Sir, when are we to have enough of this Tariff question? In 1816, it was supposed to be settled. Only three years thereafter, another proposition for increasing it was sent from this House to the Senate, *baited* with a tax of four cents per pound on brown sugar. It was, fortunately, rejected in that body. In what manner *this bill* is baited, it does not become me to say; but I have too distinct a recollection of the vote in committee of the whole, on the duty upon molasses, and afterwards, of the vote in the House on the same question; of the votes of more than one of the states on that question, not to mark it well. I do not say that the change of the vote on that question was effected by any man's *voting* against his own motion; but I do not hesitate to say, that it was effected by one man's electioneering against his own motion. I am very glad, Mr. Speaker, that old Massachusetts Bay, and the Province of Maine and Sagadahock, by whom we stood in the days of the Revolution, now stand by the South, and will not aid in fixing on us this system of taxation, compared with which, the taxation of Mr. Grenville and Lord North was as nothing. I speak with knowledge of what I say, when I declare, that this bill is an attempt to reduce the country, south of Mason and Dixon's line and east of the Allegany mountains, to a state of worse than colonial bondage; a state to which the domination of Great Britain was, in my judgment, far preferable; and I trust I shall always have the fearless integrity to utter any political sentiment which the head sanctions and the heart ratifies: for the British Parliament never would have dared to lay such duties on our imports, or their exports to us, either "*at home*" or here, as is now proposed to be laid upon the imports from abroad. At that time, we had the command of the market of the vast dominions then subject, and we should have had those which have since been subjected, to the British empire: we enjoyed a free trade, eminently superior to any thing that we can enjoy, if this bill shall go into operation. It is a sacrifice of the interests of a part of this nation to the ideal benefit of the rest. It marks us out as the victims of a worse than Egyptian bondage. It is a barter of so much of our rights, of so much of the fruits of our labor, for political power to be transferred.

to other hands. It ought to be met, and I trust it will be met, in the Southern country, as was the Stamp act, and by all those measures, which I will not detain the House by recapitulating, which succeeded the Stamp act, and produced the final breach with the mother country, which it took about ten years to bring about; as I trust in my conscience, it will not take as long to bring about similar results from this measure, should it become a law.

All policy is very suspicious, says an eminent statesman, that sacrifices the interest of any part of a community to the ideal good of the whole; and those governments only are tolerable, where, by the necessary construction of the political machine, the interest of all the parts are obliged to be protected by it. Here is a district of country extending from the Patapsco to the Gulf of Mexico, from the Allegany to the Atlantic, a district, which, taking in all that part of Maryland lying south of the Patapsco and east of Elk river, raises five sixths of all the exports of this country, that are of home growth—I have in my hand the official statements, which prove it, but which I will not weary the House by reading, (*See Appendix, note 4.*)—in all this country—Yes, sir, and I bless God for it; for, with all the fantastical and preposterous theories about the rights of man (the *theories*, not the rights themselves, I speak of,) there is nothing but power that can restrain power—I bless God, that, in this insulted, oppressed, and outraged region, we are, as to our counsels in regard to this measure, but as one man; that there exists on the subject but one feeling and one interest. We are proscribed and put to the ban; and, if we do not feel, and, feeling, do not act, we are bastards to those fathers who achieved the Revolution: then shall we deserve to make our bricks without straw. There is no case on record, in which a proposition like this, suddenly changing the whole frame of a country's polity, tearing asunder every ligature of the body politic, was ever carried by a lean majority of two or three votes, unless it be the usurpation of the septennial act, which passed the British Parliament by, I think, a majority of one vote, the same that laid the tax on cotton bagging. I do not stop here, sir, to argue about the constitutionality of this bill; I consider the constitution a dead letter: I consider it to consist, at this time, of the power of the general government and the power of the states: that is the constitution. You may entrench yourself in parchment to the teeth, says Lord Chatlam, the sword will find its way to the vitals of the constitution. I have no faith in parchment, sir; I have no faith in the abracadabra of the constitution; I have no faith in it. I have faith in the power of that commonwealth, of which I am an unworthy son; in the power of those Carolinas, and of that Georgia, in her antient and utmost extent, to the Mississippi, which went with us through the valley of the shadow of death, in the war of our independence. I have said, that I shall not stop to discuss the constitutionality of this question, for that reason, and for a better: that there never was a constitution under the sun, in which, by an unwise exercise of the powers of the government, the people may not be driven to the extremity of re-

sistance by force. "For it is not, perhaps, so much by the assumption of unlawful powers, as by the unwise or unwarrantable use of those which are most legal, that governments oppose their true end and object; for there is such a thing as tyranny as well as usurpation." If, under a power to regulate trade, you prevent exportation; if, with the most approved spring lancets, you draw the last drop of blood from our veins; if, *secundum artem*, you draw the last shilling from our pockets, what are the checks of the constitution to us? A fig for the constitution! When the scorpion's sting is probing us to the quick, shall we stop to chop logic? Shall we get some learned and cunning clerk to say whether the power to do this is to be found in the constitution, and then, if he, from whatever motive, shall maintain the affirmative, like the animal whose fleece forms so material a portion of this bill, quietly lie down and be shorn?

Sir, events now passing elsewhere, which plant a thorn in my pillow and a dagger in my heart, admonish me of the difficulty of governing with sobriety any people who are over head and ears in debt. That state of things begets a temper which sets at naught every thing like reason and common sense. This country is unquestionably laboring under great distress, but we cannot legislate it out of that distress. We may, by your legislation, reduce all the country south and east of Mason and Dixon's line, the whites as well as the blacks, to the conditions of Helots—You can do no more. We have had placed before us, in the course of this discussion, foreign examples and authorities; and among other things, we have been told, as an argument in favor of this measure, of the prosperity of Great Britain. Have gentlemen taken into consideration the peculiar advantages of Great Britain? Have they taken into consideration that, not excepting Mexico, and that fine country which lies between the Orinoco and the Caribbean sea, England is decidedly superior in point of physical advantages, to every country under the sun? This is unquestionably true. I will enumerate some of those advantages. First, there is her climate. In England, such is the temperature of the air, that a man can there do more days work in the year, and more hours work in the day, than in any other climate in the world; of course I include Scotland and Ireland in this description. It is in such a climate only, that the human animal can bear without extirpation the corrupted air, the noisome exhalations, the incessant labor of these accursed manufactories.—Yes, sir, accursed; for I say it is an accursed thing which I will neither taste, nor touch, nor handle. If we were to act here on the English system, we should have the yellow fever at Philadelphia, New York, &c. not in August merely, but from June to January, and from January to June. The climate of *this* country alone, were there no other natural obstacle to it, says aloud, you shall not manufacture! Even our tobacco factories, admitted to be the most wholesome of any sort of factories, are known to be, where extensive, the very Nidus (if I may use the expression,) of Yellow Fever and other fevers of similar type. In another of the advantages of Great Britain, so important to her prosperity, we are almost on a par with her,

if we knew how properly to use it.—*Fortunatos nimium sua si bona norint*—for, as regards defence, we are, to all intents and purposes, almost as much an island as England herself. But one of her insular advantages we can never acquire. Every part of that country is accessible from the sea. There, as you recede from the sea, you do not get further from the sea. I know that a great deal will be said of our majestic rivers, about the father of floods, and his tributary streams; but, with the Ohio, frozen up all the winter and dry all the summer, with a long tortuous, difficult, and dangerous navigation thence to the ocean, the gentlemen of the west may rest assured that they will never derive one particle of advantage, from even a total prohibition of foreign manufactures. You may succeed in reducing us to your own level of misery; but, if we were to agree to become your slaves, you never can derive one farthing of advantage from this bill. What parts of this country can derive any advantage from it? Those parts only, where there is a water power in immediate contact with navigation; such as the vicinities of Boston, Providence, Baltimore, Richmond, &c. Petersburg is the last of these as you travel south.* You take a bag of cotton up the river to Pittsburg, or to Zanesville, to have it manufactured and sent down to New Orleans for a market, and before your bag of cotton has got to the place of manufacture, the manufacturer of Providence has received his returns for the goods made from his bag of cotton purchased at the same time that you purchased yours. No, sir, gentlemen may as well insist that because the Chesapeake Bay, *mare nostrum*, our Mediterranean Sea, gives us every advantage of navigation, we shall exclude from it every thing but Steam-boats and those boats called *katochen*, *per emphasin*, *par excellence*, Kentucky boats—a sort of huge, square, clumsy wooden box. And why not insist upon it? Hav'nt you “the power to REGULATE COMMERCE?” Would not that too be a “REGULATION OF COMMERCE?” It would, indeed, and a pretty regulation it is; and so is this bill. And, Sir, I marvel that the representation from the great commercial state of New York should be in favor of this bill. If operative—and if inoperative why talk of it?—If operative, it must, like the embargo of 1807, 8, 9, transfer no small portion of the wealth of the London of America, as New York has been called, to Quebec and Montreal. She will receive the most of her imports from abroad, down the river. I do not know any bill that could be better calculated for Vermont than this bill: because, through Vermont, from Quebec, Montreal, and other positions on the St. Lawrence, we are, if it passes, unquestionably to receive our supplies of foreign goods. It will no doubt, also, suit the Niagara frontier.

But, sir, I must not suffer myself to be led too far astray from the topic of the peculiar advantages of England as a manufacturing country. Her vast beds of coal are inexhaustible: there are daily discoveries of quantities of it, greater than ages past have yet con-

* Petersburg is the last of these situations combining navigation and water power, as you travel southward from Boston to New Orleans.

sumed; to which beds of coal her manufacturing establishments have been transferred, as any man may see who will compare the present population of her towns with what it was formerly. It is to these beds of coal that Birmingham, Manchester, Wolverhampton, Sheffield, Leeds, and other manufacturing towns, owe their growth. If you could destroy her coal in one day, you would cut at once the sinews of her power. Then, there are her metals, and particularly tin, of which she has the exclusive monopoly. Tin, I know, is to be found in Japan, and perhaps elsewhere, but, in practice, England has now the monopoly of that article. I might go further, said Mr. R. and I might say, that England possesses an advantage, *quo ad hoc*, in her institutions; for *there* men are compelled to pay their debts. But, *here*, men are not only not compelled to pay their debts, but they are protected in the refusal to pay them, in the scandalous evasion of their legal obligations; and, after being convicted of embezzling the public moncy, and the money of others, of which they were the appointed guardians and trustees, they have the impudence to obtrude their unblushing fronts into society, and elbow honest men out of their way. There, though all men are on a footing of equality on the high way, and in the courts of law, at mill and at market, yet the castes in Hindoostan are not more distinctly separated, one from the other, than the different classes of society are in England. It is true that it is practicable for a wealthy merchant or a manufacturer, or his descendants, after having, through two or three generations, washed out what is considered the stain of their original occupation, to emerge, by slow degrees, into the higher ranks of society; but this rarely happens. Can you find men of vast fortune, in this country, content to move in the lower circles—content as the ox under the daily drudgery of the yoke? It is true that, in England, some of these wealthy people take it into their heads to buy seats in Parliament. But, when they get there, unless they possess great talents, they are mere nonentities; their existence is only to be found in the Red Book which contains a list of the members of Parliament. Now, sir, I wish to know if, in the western country, where any man may get beastly drunk for three pence sterling—in England you cannot get a small wine glass of spirits under twenty five cents; one such drink of grog as I have seen swallowed in this country, would there cost a dollar—in the western country, where every man can get as much meat and bread as he can consume, and yet spend the best part of his days, and nights too, perhaps, on the tavern benches, or loitering at the cross roads asking the news; can you expect the people of such a country, with countless millions of wild land and wild animals besides, can be cooped up in manufacturing establishments, and made to work sixteen hours a day, under the superintendence of a driver—yes, a driver, compared with whom a southern overseer is a gentleman and man of refinement; for, if they do not work, these work people in the manufactories, they cannot eat—and, among all the punishments that can be devised (put death even among the number,) I defy you to get as much work out of a man by any of them, as when he knows that he must work before he can eat.

But, Sir, if we follow the example of England in one respect, as we are invited to do, we must also follow it in another. If we adopt her policy, we must adopt her institutions also. Her policy is the result of her institutions, and our institutions must be as the result of our policy, assimilated to hers. We cannot adopt such an exterior system as that of England, without adopting also her interior policy. We have heard of her wealth, her greatness, her glory; but her eulogist is silent about the poverty, wretchedness, misery, of the lowest orders. Shew me the country, say gentlemen, which has risen to glory without this system of bounties and protection on manufactures. Sir, shew me any country, beyond our own, which has risen to glory or to greatness, without an established church, or without a powerful aristocracy, if not an hereditary nobility. I know no country in Europe, except Turkey, without hereditary nobles. Must we, too, have these Corinthian ornaments of society, because those countries of greatness and glory have given in to them? But, after we shall have destroyed all our foreign trade; after we shall have, by the prevention of imports, cut off exports—thus keeping the promise of the constitution to the ear, and breaking it to the hope—paltering with the people in a double sense—after we shall have done this, we are told “we shall only have to resort to an *excise*—we have only to *change* the *mode* of collection of taxes from the people; both modes of taxation are *voluntary*.” Very voluntary! The exciseman comes into my house, searches my premises, respects not even the privacy of female apartments, measures, gauges and weighs every thing, levies a tax upon every thing, and then tells me the tax is a voluntary one on my part, and that I am, or ought to be, content. Yes, voluntary, as Portia said to Shylock, when she played the judge so rarely—art thou content Jew? Art thou content?

These taxes, however, it seems, are voluntary, “as being altogether upon consumption.” By a recent speech on this subject, the greater part of which, said Mr. R. I was so fortunate as to hear, I learn that there have been only two hundred capital prosecutions in England, within a given time, for violations of the revenue laws. Are we ready, if one of us, too poor to own a saddle horse, should borrow a saddle and clap it on his plough horse, to ride to church or court, or mill or market, to be taxed for a surplus saddle-horse, and surcharged for having failed to list him as such? Are gentlemen aware of the inquisitorial, dispensing, arbitrary, and almost papal power of the Commissioners of Excise? I shall not stop to go into a detail of them; but I never did expect to hear it said, on this floor, and by a gentleman from Kentucky too, that the excise system was a mere scare-crow, a bug-bear, that the sound of the words constituted all the difference between a system of excise, and a system of customs; that both meant the same thing:—“Write them together, your’s is as fair a name;—Sound them, it doth become the mouth as well”—here, Sir, I must beg leave to differ, I do not think it does:—“Weigh them, it is as *heavy*”—[that I grant]—“conjure with them”—excise—“will start a *spirit* as soon as” *customs*;—

—*This* I verily believe Sir, and I wish, with all my heart, if this bill is to pass; if new and unnecessary burthens are to be wantonly imposed upon the people; that we were to return home with the blessed news of a tax or excise, not less by way of "minimum," than fifty cents per gallon upon whiskey. And here, if I did not consider an exciseman to bear, according to the language of the old law books, *caput lupinum*, and that it was almost as meritorious to shoot such a hell-hound of tyranny, as to shoot a wolf or a mad dog—and, if I did not know that any thing like an excise in this country is in effect utterly impracticable, I myself, feeling, seeing, blushing for my country, would gladly vote to lay an excise on this abominable liquor, the lavish consumption of which renders this the most drunken nation under the sun; and yet, we have refused to take the duties from wines, from cheap French wines particularly, that might lure the dog from his vomit, and lay the foundation of a reformation of the public manners. Sir, an excise system can never be maintained in this country. I had as lief be a tythe-proctor in Ireland, and met on a dark night in a narrow road by a dozen white-boys, or peep-of-day boys, or hearts of oak, or hearts of steel, as an exciseman in the Alleghany mountains, met, in a lonely road, or by-place, by a backwoodsman, with a rifle in his hand. With regard to Ireland, the British chancellor of the exchequer has been obliged to reduce the excise in Ireland on distilled spirits, to comparatively nothing to what it was formerly, in consequence of the impossibility of collecting it in that country. Ireland is, not to speak with statistical accuracy, about the size of Pennsylvania, containing something like twenty-five thousand square miles of territory, with a population of six millions of inhabitants, nearly as great a number as the whole of the white population of the United States; with a standing army of 20,000 men; with another standing army, composed of all those classes in civil life, who, through the instrumentality of that army, keep the wretched people in subjection—under all these circumstances, even in Ireland, the excise cannot be collected. I venture to say, that no army that the earth has ever seen—not such an one as that of Bonaparte, which marched to the invasion of Russia—would be capable of collecting an excise in this country—not such an one as that described, if you will allow me to give some delightful poetry in exchange for very wretched prose, as Milton has described:

"Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When Agrican, with all his northern powers,
Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Calliphron, from whence to win
The fairest of her sex, Angelica,
His daughter, sought by many prowrest knights,
Both Paynim and the Peers of Charlemagne."

Not such a force, nor even the troops with which he compares them, which were no less than "the legion fiends of hell," could collect an excise here. If any officer of our government were to take

the field a still-hunting, as they call it in Ireland, among our southern or western forests and mountains, I should like to see the throwing off of the hounds. I have still enough of the sportsman about me, that I should like to see the breaking cover; and, above all, I should like to be in at the death.

And what, said Mr. Randolph, are we now about to do? For what was the Constitution formed? To drive the people of any part of this Union from the plough to the distaff? Sir, the Constitution of the United States never would have been formed, and if formed, would have been scouted, *una voce*, by the people, if viewed as a means for effecting purposes like this. The Constitution was formed for external purposes, to raise armies and navies, and to lay uniform duties on imports, to raise a revenue to defray the expenditure for such objects. What are you going to do now? To turn the Constitution wrong side out; to abandon foreign commerce and exterior relations—I am sorry to use this Frenchified word—the foreign affairs, which it was established to regulate, and convert it into a municipal agent, to carry a system of espionage and excise into every log house in the United States. We went to war with Great Britain for Free Trade and Sailors' Rights; we made a Treaty of Peace in which I never could, with the aid of my glasses, see a word about either the one or the other of these objects of contention; we are now determined never to be engaged in another for such purposes; for we are, ourselves, putting an end to them. And, by the way of comfort in this state of things, we have been told, by the doctor as well as by the apothecary, that much cannot be immediately expected from this new scheme; that years will pass away before its beneficial effects will be fully realized. And to whom is this told? To the consumptive patient it is said—here is the remedy; persevere in it *for a few years*, and it will infallibly cure your disorder: and this infallible remedy is prescribed for pulmonary consumption, which is an opprobrium of physicians, and has reached a stage, that, in a few months, not to say days, must inevitably terminate the existence of the patient. This is to be done, too, on the plea that the people who call for this measure are already ruined. I will do any thing, sir, in reason, to relieve these persons; but I can never agree, because they are ruined, and we are half-ruined only, that we shall be entirely ruined, for the contingent possibility of their relief. We have no belief in this new theory—new, for it came in with the French Revolution, and that is of modern date—of the transfusion of blood from a healthy animal to a sick one: and, if there is to be such a transfusion for the benefit of these ruined persons now, we refer the gentlemen to bulls and goats for supplies of blood, for we should be the veriest asses to permit them to draw our own.

We are told, however, that we have nothing to do but to postpone the payment of the public debt for a few years, and wait for an accumulation of wealth, for a new run of luck,

“Rusticus expectat dum defluet omnis et ille

“Labitur et labitur in omne volubilis ævum,”



This postponement of the public debt is no novelty. All debts are, now-a-days, as old Lilly hath it, in the future in *rus*, "about to be" paid. We have gone on postponing paying the national debt, and our own debts, until individual credit is at an end; until property, low as it is reduced in price by our fantastic legislation, can no longer be bought but for ready money. Here is one, and there the other. I am describing a state of society which I know to exist in a part of the country, and which I hear, with concern, does exist in a greater degree, in a much larger portion of the country, than I pretend to be personally acquainted with.

In all beneficial changes in the natural world—and the sentiment is illustrated by one of the most beautiful effusions of imagination and genius that I ever read—in all those changes, which are the work of an all-wise, all-seeing, and superintending providence, as in the insensible gradation by which the infant bud expands into manhood, and from manhood to cenility; or, if you will, to caducity itself,—you find nature never working but by gradual and imperceptible changes; you cannot see the object move, but take your eye from it for a while, and, like the index of that clock, you can see that it has moved. The old proverb says, God works good, and always by degrees. The devil, on the other hand, is bent on mischief, and always in a hurry. *He* cannot stay: his object is mischief, which can best be effected suddenly, and he must be gone to work elsewhere. But we have the comfort, under the pressure of this measure, that at least no force is exercised upon us; we are not obliged to buy goods of foreign manufacture. It is true, sir, that gentlemen have not said you shall not send your tobacco or cotton abroad; but they have said the same thing, in other words; by preventing the importation of the returns which we used to receive, and without which, the sale or exchange of our produce is impracticable, they say to us, you shall sell only to us, and we will give you what we please; you shall buy only of us, but at what price we please to ask. But no force is used! You are at full liberty not to buy or to sell. Sir, when an English Judge once told a certain curate of Brentford, that the court of chancery was open equally to the rich and the poor, Horne Tooke replied, "so, my lord, is the London Tavern." You show a blanket or a warm rug to a wretch that is shivering with cold, and tell him you shall get one no where else, but you are at liberty not to buy mine.

No Jew, who ever tampered with the necessities of a profligate young heir, lending him money at an usury of cent. per cent., ever acted more paternally than the advocates of this bill, to those upon whom it is to operate. I advise you, young man, for your good, says the usurer. I do these things very reluctantly, says Moses—these courses will lead you to ruin. But, no *force*—no sir, no force short of Russian despotism, shall induce me to purchase, or, knowing it, to use any article from the region of country which attempts to cram this bill down our throats. On this, we of the south are as resolved, as were our fathers about the tea, which they refused to drink; for this is the same old question of the stamp act in a new shape, viz; whether they, who have no common feeling with us, shall impose on

us, not merely a burthensome but a ruinous tax, and that, by way of experiment and sport. And I say again, if we are to submit to such usurpations, give me George Grenville, give me Lord North for a master. It is in this point of view that I most deprecate the bill. If, (said Mr. R.) from the language I have used, any gentleman shall believe I am not as much attached to this Union as any one on this floor, he will labor under a great mistake. But there is no magic in this word *union*. I value it as the means of preserving the liberty and happiness of the people. Marriage itself is a good thing, but the marriages of Mezentius were not so esteemed. The marriage of Sinbad, the sailor, with the corse of his deceased wife, was an union, and just such an union will this be, if, by a bare majority in both Houses, this bill shall become a law. And, I ask, sir, whether it will redound to the honor of this House, if this bill should pass, that the people should owe their escape to the act of any others rather than to us? Shall we, when even the British Parliament are taking off taxes by wholesale—when all the assessed taxes are diminished fifty per cent,—when the tax on salt is reduced seven eighths, with a pledge that the remainder shall come off, and the whole would have been repealed, but that it was kept on as a salvo for the wounded pride of Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, when asked—why keep on this odious tax, which brings but a paltry hundred and fifty thousand per annum? answered, by subterfuge and evasion, as I have heard done in this House, and drew back upon his resources, his majority—how will it answer for the people to have to look up for their escape from oppression, not to their immediate Representatives, but to the Representatives of the States, or, possibly, to the Executive? And, permit me here to say, and I say it freely because it is true, that I join as heartily as any man, in reprehending “the cold, ambiguous support of the executive government to this bill.” I do not use my own words; I deprecate as much as any member of this House can do, that the Executive of this country should lend to this bill, or to any other bill, a cold and ambiguous support, or support of any sort, until it comes before him in the shape of a law, unless it be a measure which he, in his constitutional capacity, may have invited Congress to pass. I may be permitted to say, and I will say, that, in case this bill should be unhappily presented to him for his signature, and as an allusion has been made to him in debate, I presume I may repeat it,—I hope he will recollect how much the country that gave him birth has done for him, and the little, not to say worse than nothing, that, during his administration, he has done for her. I hope, Sir, he will scout the bill as contrary to the genius of our government, to the whole spirit and letter of our confederation—I say of our confederation—Blessed be God, it is a confederation, and that it contains within itself the redeeming power which has more than once been exercised—and that it contains within itself the seeds of preservation, if not of this Union, at least of the individual Commonwealths of which it is composed.

But, sir, not satisfied with an appeal to the example of Great Bri-

tain, whom we have been content hitherto very sedulously to censure and to imitate,—as I once heard a certain person say that it was absolutely necessary for persons of a peculiar character to be extremely vehement of censure of the very vice of which they are themselves guilty—the example of Russia has been introduced, the very last, I should suppose, that would be brought into this House on this or any other question. A gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. Poinsett,) whose intelligence and information I very much respect, but the feebleness of whose voice does not permit him to be heard as distinctly as could be wished, remarked the other day, and, having it on my notes, I will, with his leave, repeat it—Russia is cursed with a paper money, which, in point of depreciation and its consequent embarrassment to her, can boast of no advantage, I believe, even over that of Kentucky—so cursed, that it is impossible, until her circulation is restored to a healthful state, she can ever take her station as a commercial or manufacturing nation, to any extent. Nay, more, Russia, with the exception of a few of her provinces, consists, like the interior of America, of a vast inland continent, desolated and deformed by prairies or steppes, as they are there called, inhabited by a sparse population; and, as an appeal has been made to experience, said Mr. R. I ask any gentleman to shew me an instance of any country under the sun that has, under these circumstances, taken a stand as a manufacturing or great commercial nation. These great rivers and inland seas cut a mighty figure on the map, but, when you come to consider of capacities for foreign commerce, how unlike the insular situation of Great Britain, or the peninsular situation of almost the whole continent of Europe—surrounded or penetrated as it is by inland seas and gulfs! May I be pardoned for adverting to the fact—I know that comparisons are extremely odious—that, when we look to Salem and Boston, to parts of the country where skill, and capital, and industry, notoriously exist, we find opposition to this bill; and that, when we look to countries which could sooner build one hundred pyramids, such as that of Cheops, than manufacture one cambric needle, or a paper of White Chapel pins, or a watch-spring, we hear a clamour about this system for the protection of manufactures. The merchants and manufacturers of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, the Province of Maine, and Sagadahock repel this bill, whilst men in hunting shirts, with deer-skin leggins and moccasins on their feet, want protection for manufactures—men with rifles on their shoulders, and long knives in their belts, seeking in the forests to lay in their next winter's supply of bear-meat. But it is not there alone the cry is heard. It is at Baltimore—decayed, deserted Baltimore, whose exports have more than one-half decreased, whilst those of Boston have four times increased—it is decayed and deserted Baltimore that comes here and asks us for the protection of those interests which have grown up during the late war—privateering among the number, I presume. Philadelphia, too, in a state of atrophy, asks for the measure—Philadelphia, who never can, pass what bill you please, have a foreign trade to any great amount,

or become a great manufacturing town, for which she wants all the elements of climate, coal, and capital—this city, now over built, swollen to the utmost extent of the integument, and utterly destitute of force or weight in the Union, wants this bill for the protection of the domestic industry of her free blacks, I presume, New York, too, is now willing to build up Montreal and Quebec at her expense—to convert the Hudson into a theatre for rival disputants about steam-boats in the courts below stairs, and for them, and such as them, with a coasting licence, to ply upon. The true remedy, and the only one, for the iron manufacturer of Pennsylvania, who has nothing but iron to sell, and that, they tell us, is worth nothing, would be to lay on the table of this House a declaration of war in blank, and then go into a committee of the whole, to see what nation in the world it would be most convenient to go to war with—for, fill the blank with the name of what power you please, it must be a sovereign state, and, though it have not a seaman or a vessel in the world, its commissions are as good and valid in an admiralty court, as those of the Lord High Admiral of Great Britain. In this way you will put our furnaces in blast, and your paper mills into full operation; and many, very many, who, during the last war, transported flour on horse-back for the supply of your army, at the cost of an hundred dollars per barrel, and who have since transported provisions in steam-boats up and down the Missouri river—very many such individuals would thus be taken out of the very jaws of bankruptcy and lifted up to opulence, at the expense of that people, at whose expense, also, you are now about to enable these iron manufacturers to fill their pockets. New England does not want this bill. Connecticut, indeed, molasses having been thrown overboard to lighten the ship, votes for this bill. A word in the ear of the land of steady habits—I voted against that tax, on the principle, which has always directed my public life, not to compromise my opinions—not to do evil that good may come of it—let me tell the land of steady habits, that, after this bill shall be fairly off the shore; after we shall have cleared decks and made ready for action again; after she shall have imposed on me the onerous burthen of this bill, she shall have the benefit of my vote to put on again this duty on molasses—not at this day—this is not the last tariff measure; for, in less than five years, I would, if I were a betting man, wager any odds that we have another tariff proposition, worse by far than that, amendments to which gentlemen had strangled yesterday by the bow-string of the previous question. Fair dealing leads to safe counsels and safe issues. There is a certain left-handed wisdom, that often overreaches its own objects, which, grasps at the shadow and lets go the substance. We shall not only have this duty on molasses, I can tell the gentlemen from Connecticut, but we shall have, moreover, an additional bounty on intoxication by whiskey, in the shape of an additional duty on foreign distilled spirits.

The ancient Commonwealth of Virginia, one of whose unworthy sons, and more unworthy representatives, I am, said Mr. R., must now begin to open her eyes to the fatal policy which she has pursu-

ed for the last forty years. I have not a doubt, that they who were the agents for transferring her vast, and boundless, and fertile country to the United States, with an express stipulation, in effect, that not an acre of it should ever enure to the benefit of any man from Virginia, were as respectable, and kind hearted, and hospitable, and polished, and guileless Virginia gentlemen, as ever were cheated out of their estates by their overseers; men who, as long as they could command the means, by sale of their last acre, or last negro, would have a good dinner, and give a hearty welcome to whomsoever chose to drop in, to eat, friend or stranger, bidden or unbidden. What will be the effect of this bill on the Southern states? The effect of this policy is, what I shudder to look at; the more, because the next census is held up *in terrorem* over us. We are told, you had better consent to *this*—we are not threatened exactly with General Gage and the Boston Port bill—but we are told by gentlemen, we shall, after the next census, so saddle, and bridle, and *martingale* you, that you will be easily regulated by any bit, or whip, however severe, or spurs, however rank, of domestic manufacture, that we choose to use. But this argument, sir, has no weight in it with me. I do not choose to be robbed now, because, after I am once robbed, it will become easier to rob me again. *Obstapropriis*, is my maxim—because every act of extension of the system operates in a two-fold way, decreasing the strength and means of the robber, and increasing those of the robber. This is as true as any proposition in mathematics. Gentlemen need not tell us, we had better give in at once. No, sir, we shall not give in; no, we shall hold out—we shall not give in. We do not mean to be threatened out of our rights by the menace of another census. We are aware of our folly, and it is our business to provide against the consequences of it, but not in this way. When I recollect, that the tariff of 1816 was followed by that of 1819–20, and that by this measure of 1823–24, I cannot believe that we are at any time hereafter, long to be exempt from the demands of these sturdy beggars, who will take no denial. Every concession does but render every fresh demand and new concession more easy. It is like those dastard nations who vainly think to buy peace. When I look back to what the country of which I am a representative was, and when I see what it is—when I recollect the expression of Lord Cornwallis, applied to Virginia, “that great and unterrified colony,” which he was about to enter, not without some misgivings of his mind as to the result of the invasion—when I compare what she was when this House of Representatives first assembled in the city of New York, and what she now is, I know, by the disastrous contrast, that her councils have not been governed by statesmen. They might be admirable professors of a university, powerful dialecticians *ex cathedra*, but no sound counsels of wise statesmen could ever lead to such practical ill results as are exhibited by a comparison of the past and present condition of the ancient colony and dominion of Virginia.

In the course of this discussion, said Mr. R. I have heard, I will not say with surprise, because *nil admirari*, is my motto—no doc-

trine that can be broached on this floor can ever, hereafter, excite surprise in my mind—I have heard the names of Say, Ganilh, Adam Smith, and Ricardo, pronounced, not only in terms, but in a tone, of sneering contempt, as visionary theorists, destitute of practical wisdom, and the whole clan of Scotch and Quarterly reviewers lugged in to boot. This, sir, is a sweeping clause of proscription. With the names of Say, Smith, and Ganilh, I profess to be acquainted, for I, too, am versed in *title pages*, but I did not expect to hear, in this House, a name, with which I am a little further acquainted, treated with so little ceremony, and by whom? I leave Adam Smith to the simplicity, and majesty, and strength of his own native genius which has canonized his name—a name which will be pronounced with veneration, when not one name in this House will be remembered. But, one word as to Ricardo, the last mentioned of these writers—a new authority, though the grave has already closed upon him, and set its seal upon his reputation. I shall speak of him in the language of a man of as great a genius as this, or perhaps any, age has ever produced—a man remarkable for the depth of his reflections and the acumen of his penetration. ‘I had been led,’ says this man, ‘to look into loads of books—my understanding had for too many years been intimate with severe thinkers, with logic, and the great masters of knowledge, not to be aware of the utter feebleness of the herd of modern economists. I sometimes read chapters from more recent works, or part of Parliamentary debates. I saw that these [ominous words!] ‘were generally the very dregs and rinsings of the human intellect.’ [I am very glad, sir, he did not read *our* debates. What would he have said of ours?—] ‘At length a friend sent me Mr. Ricardo’s book, and recurring to my own prophetic anticipation of the advent of some legislator on this science, I said, Thou art the man. Wonder and curiosity had long been dead in me; yet I wondered once more. Had this profound work been really written in England during the 19th century? Could it be that an Englishman, and he not in academic bowers, but oppressed by mercantile and senatorial cares, had accomplished what all the universities and a century of thought had failed to advance by one hair’s breadth? All other writers had been crushed and overlaid by the enormous weight of facts and documents; Mr. Ricardo had deduced, *a priori*, from the understanding itself, laws which first gave a ray of light into the unwieldy chaos of materials, and had constructed what had been but a collection of tentative discussions, into a science of regular proportions, now first standing on an eternal basis.’

I pronounce no opinion of my own, said Mr. R., on Ricardo; I recur rather to the opinion of a man, inferior in point of original and native genius, and that highly cultivated, too, to none of the moderns, and few of the ancients. Upon this subject, what shall we say to the following fact? Butler, who is known to gentlemen of the profession of the law, as the annotator, with Hargrave, on Lord Coke, speaking with Fox as to political economy—that most extraordinary man, unrivalled for his powers of debate, excelled by no man that ever

lived, or probably ever will live, as a public debater, and of the deepest of political erudition, fairly confessed that he had never read Adam Smith. Butler said to Mr. Fox "that he had never read Adam Smith's work on the Wealth of Nations." "To tell you the truth," replied Mr. Fox, "nor I neither. There is something in all these subjects that passes my comprehension—something so wide that I could never embrace them myself, or find any one who did." And yet we see how we, with our little dividers, undertake to lay off the scale, and with our pack-thread to take the soundings, and speak with a confidence peculiar to quacks (in which the regular bred professor never indulges) on this abstruse and perplexing subject. Confidence is one thing, knowledge another; of the want of which, overweening confidence is notoriously the indication. What of that? Let Ganiilh, Say, Ricardo, Smith—all Greek and Roman fame be against us—we appeal to Dionysius in support of our doctrines; and to him not on the throne of Syracuse but at Corinth—not in absolute possession of that most wonderful and enigmatical city, as difficult to comprehend as the abstrusest problem of political economy, which furnished not only the means but the men for supporting the greatest wars—a kingdom within itself, under whose ascendant the genius of Athens, in her most high and palmy state, quailed, and stood rebuked. No; we follow the pedagogue to the schools—dictating in the classic shades of Longwood—(*lucus a non lucendo*)—to his disciples.

We have been told that the economists are right in theory and wrong in practice; which is as much as to say, that two bodies occupy at the same time the same space; for it is equally impracticable to be right in theory and wrong in practice. It is easy to be wrong in practice; but if our practice corresponds with our theory, it is a solecism to say that we can be right in the one and wrong in the other. As for Alexander and Cæsar, said Mr. R., I have as little respect for their memory as is consistent with that involuntary homage which all must pay to men of their prowess and abilities; and if Alexander had suffered himself to be led by the nose out of Babylon and banished to Sinope, or if Cæsar had suffered himself to be deprived of his imperial sway, not by the dagger of the assassin, but by his own slavish fears, I should have as little respect for their memory as for that of him whose example has on this occasion been held up to us for admiration. Speaking of that man who has kept me awake night after night, and has been to me an incubus by day, for fear of the vastness of his designs, I cannot conceive of a spectacle so pitiful, so despicable, as that man, under those circumstances; and if the work dictated by him at St. Helena be read with the slightest attention, no forsworn witness at the Old Bailey was ever detected in so many contradictions as he has been guilty of. No, sir, the Jupiter from whose reluctant hand the thunder-bolt is wrung, is not the one at whose shrine I worship—not that I think that the true Amphitruon is always him with whom we dine—he is not the political economist who is to take place of Smith and Ricardo. Will any man make me believe that he understood the theory or the practice of political economy better than these men, or than Charles Fox? Impossible.

When I recollect what that man might have done for liberty, and what he did; when I recollect that to him we owe this Holy Alliance—this fearful power of Russia—of Russia, where I should advise persons to go who desired to be instructed in petty treason by the murder of a husband, or in parricide by the murder of a father, but from whom I should never think of taking a lesson in political economy—to whom I would say, rather, pay your debts, not in depreciated paper; do not commit daily acts of bankruptcy; restore your currency; practise on the principles of liberality and justice, and then I will listen to you—No, sir, Russia may, if she pleases, not only lay heavy duties on imports; she may prohibit them if she pleases; *she* has nothing to export but what some other inland countries have, political power—physical, to be sure, as well as intellectual power—but she does not even dare to attack the Turk: she cannot stir: she is something like some of our interior people of the South, who have plenty of land, plenty of serfs, smoke-houses filled with meat, and very fine horses to ride, but who, when they go abroad, have not one shilling to bless themselves with: and so long as she is at peace, and does not trouble the rest of the world, so long she may be suffered to remain: but, if she should continue to act hereafter as she has done heretofore, it will be the interest of the civilized world to procure her dismemberment, *per fas aut nefas*.

But it is said, a measure of this sort is necessary to create employment for the people. Why, sir, where are the handles of the plough? Are they unfit for *young gentlemen* to touch? Or will they rather choose to enter your military academies, where the sons of the rich are educated at the expense of the poor, and where so many political Janissaries are every year turned out, always ready for war, and to support the powers that be—equal to the Strelitzes of Moscow or St. Petersburg. I do not speak now of individuals, of course, but of the tendency of the system—the hounds follow the huntsman because he feeds them, and bears the whip. I speak of the system. I concur most heartily, sir, in the censure which has been passed upon the greediness of office, which stands a stigma on the present generation. Men from whom we might expect, and from whom I did expect better things, crowd the antichamber of the palace, for every vacant office; nay, even before men are dead, their shoes are wanted for some bare-footed office-seeker. How mistaken was the old Roman, the old Consul, who, whilst he held the plough by one hand, and death held the other, exclaimed, “*Diis immortalibus sero!*”

Our fathers, how did they acquire their property? By straight forward industry, rectitude, and frugality. How did they become dispossessed of their property? By indulging in speculative hopes and designs, seeking the shadow whilst they lost the substance; and now, instead of being, as they were, men of respectability, men of substance, men capable and willing to live independently and honestly, and hospitably too—for who so parsimonious as the prodigal who has nothing to give—What have we become? A nation of sharks, preying on one another, preying on one another through the instrumentality of this paper system, which, if Lycurgus had known of it

he would unquestionably have adopted, in preference to his iron money, if his object had been to make the Spartans the most accomplished knaves, as well as to keep them poor.

But, we are told this is a curious constitution of ours: it is made for foreigners and not for ourselves—for the protection of foreign, and not of American industry. Sir, this is a curious constitution of ours, said Mr. R.; and if I were disposed to deny it, I could not succeed. It is an anomaly in itself. It is that supposed impossibility of all writers, from Aristotle to the present day, an *imperium in imperio*. Nothing like it ever did exist, or possibly ever will, under similar circumstances. It is a constitution consisting of confederated bodies, for certain exterior purposes, and, also, for some interior purposes, but leaving to the State authorities, among a great many powers, the very one which we now propose to exercise: for, if we were now passing a *revenue bill*—a bill, the object of which were to raise revenue—however much I should deny the policy, and however I could demonstrate the futility of the plan, I still should deem it to be a constitutional bill—a bill passed to carry, *bona fide*, into effect, a provision of the Constitution, but a bill passed with short-sighted views. But this is no such bill. It is a bill, under pretence of regulating commerce, to take money from the pockets of a very large, and, I thank God, contiguous territory, and to put it into other pockets. One word, sir, on that point;—I can assure the gentlemen whose appetites are so keenly whetted for our money—I trust, at least, that if this bill passes, there will be a meeting of the members opposed to it, and a general and consentaneous resistance to its operation throughout the whole Southern country—and we shall make it by lawful means; *quant à nous*, the law will be a dead letter. It shall be to me, at least, as innocuous as the pill of the empyric, which I am determined not to swallow. The manufacturer of the East may carry his woollens, or his cottons, or his coffins, to what market he pleases—I do not buy of him. Self-defence is the first law of nature. You drive us into it. You create heats and animosities amongst this great family, who ought to live like brothers; and, after you have got this temper of mind roused among the Southern people, do you expect to come among us to trade, and expect us to buy your wares? Sir, not only shall we not buy them, but we shall take such measures (I will not enter into the detail of them now,) as shall render it impossible for you to sell them. Whatever may be said here, of the “misguided counsels,” as they have been termed, “of the theorists of Virginia,” they have, so far as regards this question, the confidence of united Virginia. We are asked—does the South lose any thing by this bill—why do you cry out? I put it, sir, to any man, from any part of the country, from the Gulf of Mexico, from the Balize, to the Eastern shore of Maryland—which, I thank heaven, is not yet under the government of Baltimore, and will not be, unless certain theories should come into play in that State, which we have lately heard of, and a majority of men, told by the head, should govern—whether the whole country, between the points I have named, is not unanimous in opposition to

this bill. Would it not be unexampled, that we should thus complain, protest, resist, and that all the while nothing should be the matter? Are our understandings (however low mine may be rated, much sounder than mine are engaged in this resistance,) to be rated so low, as that we are to be made to believe that we are children affrighted by a bug-bear? We are asked, however, why do you cry out?—it is all for your good. Sir, this reminds me of the mistresses of George II. who, when they were insulted by the populace on arriving in London, (as all such creatures deserve to be, by every mob,) put their heads out of the window, and said to them, in their broken English, “*Goot people, we be come for your goots;*” to which one of the mob rejoined—“Yes, and for our chattels too, I fancy.” Just so it is with the oppressive exactions proposed and advocated by the supporters of this bill, on the plea of the good of those who are its victims.

There is not a member of this House, said Mr. R., more deeply penetrated than the one who is endeavoring to address you, with the inadequate manner in which he has discharged the task imposed upon him—in this instance, he will say, on his part, most reluctantly. But, as I have been all my life a smatterer in history, I cannot fail to be struck with the fitness of the comparison instituted by a historian of this country with the Roman republic, just as it was in a state of preparation for a master.

“*Sed, postquam luxu, atque desidia civitas corrupta est; rursus respublica, magnitudine sua, imperatorum atque magistratuum vitia sustentabat; ac veluti effœta parentum, multis tempestatibus, haud sane quisquam Romæ virtute magnus fuit.*”

Of this quotation, I will, as they sometimes say in the Parliament, for the benefit of the country gentlemen, attempt a translation. “But, after the state had become corrupted by luxury and sloth”—in the Arabian Nights’ Entertainments, we are told of one who laid by his sequins in good money, and when he afterwards came to use them, he found them to be bits of paper, not worth more than old continental (or Kentucky) money—“by luxury and sloth, again the republic,”—and here I press the comparison—“by dint of its own magnitude, its own greatness, its own vastness, bore up under the faults, the vices, of its generals, magistrates, and that, too, as if effete—(past bearing) since, for a long while”—I hope the comparison will not hold here—“for a long time scarcely any man had become great at Rome by his merit.” So, sir, it is with this republic. It does sustain, by its greatness and growing magnitude, the follies and vices of its magistracy. Had this government been stationary like any of the old governments of Europe, of the second class, Prussia for instance, or Holland, by the political evolutions of the last thirty years—I might say the last twelve years—it would have sunk into insignificance and debility: and it is only upon this resource, the increasing greatness of this republic, that the blunderers who plunge blindfold into schemes like this, can rely for any possibility of salvation from the effect of their own rash, undigested measures. It is true, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;

and elsewhere than in the republic of Rome and of other times, than the days of Catiline, it may be said, "*Haud sane quisque virtute magnus est.*"

"'Tis not in mortals to command success!—

But do *you more* Sempronius!—*don't* deserve it,
And take my word you won't have any less;

Be wary, watch the time, and always serve it:

Give gentle way when there's too great a press;

And for your conscience only learn to nerve it,—

For, like a racer, or a boxer, training,

'Twill make, if proved, vast efforts without paining."

I had more to say, Mr. Speaker, could I have said it, on this subject. But I cannot sit down without asking those, who were once my brethren of the church, the elders in the young family of this good old republic of the thirteen states, if they can consent to rivet upon us this system, from which no benefit can possibly result to themselves. I put it to them as descendants of the renowned colony of Virginia—as children sprung from her loins—if, for the sake of all the benefits with which this bill is pretended to be freighted to them—granting such to be the fact, for argument's sake—they could consent to do such an act of violence to the unanimous opinion, feelings, prejudices, if you will, of the whole southern states, as to pass it? I go farther. I ask of them what is there in the condition of the nation, at this time, that calls for the immediate adoption of this measure? Are the Gauls at the gate of the Capitol? If they are, the cacklings of the Capitoline geese will hardly save it. What is there to induce us to plunge into the vortex of those evils so severely felt in Europe from this very manufacturing and paper-policy? For, it is evident that, if we go into this system of policy, we must adopt the European institutions also. We have very good materials to work with—We have only to make our elective King, President for life, in the first place, and then to make the succession hereditary in the family of the first that shall happen to have a promising son. For a King we can be at no loss—*ex quovis ligno*—any block will do for him. The Senate may, perhaps, be transmuted into a House of Peers, although we should meet with more difficulty than in the other case: for, Bonaparte himself was not more hardly put to it, to recruit the ranks of his mushroom nobility, than we should be to furnish a House of Peers. As for us, we are the faithful Commons, ready made to hand; but with all our loyalty, I congratulate the House—I congratulate the nation—that, although this body is daily degraded by the sight of members of Congress manufactured into placemen, we have not yet reached such a point of degradation as to submit to suffer Executive minions to be manufactured into members of Congress. We have shut *that* door; I wish we could shut the other also. I wish we could have a perpetual call of the House in this view, and suffer no one to go out from its closed doors. The time, Mr. R. said, was peculiarly inauspicious for the change in our policy which is proposed by this bill. We are on the eve of an election that promises to be the most distracted that this nation has ever yet

undergone. It may turn out to be a Polish election. At such a time, ought any measure to be brought forward which is supposed to be capable of being demonstrated to be extremely injurious to one great portion of this country, and beneficial in proportion to another? Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. There are firebrands enough in the land, without this apple of discord being cast into this assembly. Suppose this measure is not what it is represented to be; that the fears of the south are altogether illusory and visionary; that it will produce all the good predicted of it—an honorable gentleman from Kentucky, said, yesterday, and I was sorry to hear it, for I have great respect for that gentleman, and for other gentlemen from that state—that the question was not whether a bare majority should pass the bill, but whether the majority or minority should rule. The gentleman is wrong, and if he will consider the matter rightly, he will see it. Is there no difference between the patient and the actor? *We* are passive: we do not call upon *them* to act or to suffer, but we call upon them not so to act as that we must necessarily suffer: and I venture to say, that in any government properly constituted, this very consideration would operate conclusively, that, if this burden is to be laid on 102, it ought not to be laid by 105. We are the eel that is being flayed, while the cook-maid pats us on the head, and cries, with the clown in King Lear, “down, wantons, down.” There is but one portion of the country which can profit by this bill, and from that portion of the country comes this bare majority in favor of it. I bless God that Massachusetts and old Virginia are once again rallying under the same banner, against oppressive and unconstitutional taxation: for, if all the blood be drawn from out the body, I care not whether it be by the British Parliament or the American Congress—by an Emperor or a King abroad, or by a President at home.

Under these views, and with feelings of mortification and shame at the very weak opposition I have been able to make to this bill, I entreat gentlemen to consent that it may lie over, at least, until the next session of Congress. We have other business to attend to, and our families and affairs need our attention at home—and indeed I, sir, would not give one farthing for any man who prefers being here to being at home—who is a good public man and a bad private one. With these views and feelings, I move you, sir, that the bill be indefinitely postponed.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 8.

On the motion to reduce the duties on coarse woollens—

MR. RANDOLPH expressed his surprise that the votaries of humanity—persons who could not sleep, such was their distress of mind at the very existence of negro slavery—should persist in pressing a measure, the effect of which was to aggravate the misery of that unhappy condition—whether viewed in reference to the slave or to his master—if he were a man possessing a single spark of humanity—

for, what could be more pitiable than the situation of a man who had every desire to clothe his negroes comfortably—but who was absolutely prohibited from so doing by legislative enactment? He hoped that none of those who wished to enhance to the poor slave (or what was the same thing—to his master) the price of his annual blanket, and of his sordid suit of coarse, but, to him, comfortable woollen cloth—would ever travel through the southern country to spy out the nakedness, if not of the land, of the cultivators of the soil. It was notorious that the profits of slave labor had been, for a long time, on the decrease, and that, on a fair average, it scarcely reimbursed the expense of the slave, including the helpless ones, whether from infancy or age. The words of Patrick Henry, in the Convention of Virginia, still rung in his ears: “They may liberate every one of your slaves. The Congress possess the power and will exercise it.” Now, sir, the first step towards this consummation, so devoutly wished by many, is to pass such laws as may yet still further diminish the pittance which their labor yields to their unfortunate masters. To produce such a state of things as will ensure, in case the slave shall not elope from his master—his master will run away from him. Sir, the blindness, as it appears to me—I hope gentlemen will pardon the expression—with which a certain quarter of this country—I allude particularly to the seaboard of South Carolina and Georgia—has lent its aid to increase the powers of the general government on points—to say the least, of doubtful construction—fills me with astonishment and dismay. And I look forward, almost without a ray of hope, to the time which the next census, or that which succeeds it, will assuredly bring forth—when this work of destruction and devastation is to commence in the abused name of humanity and religion—and when the imploring eyes of some will be, as now, turned towards another body, in the vain hope that it may arrest the evil and stay the plague.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 12.

MR. RANDOLPH said, that if the House would lend him its attention for five minutes, he thought he could demonstrate that the argument of the gentleman from Delaware, in favor of the increased duty on brown sugar, was one of the most suicidal arguments that ever reared its spectral front in a deliberative assembly.

The gentleman objects to reducing the duty on sugar, because it will diminish the revenue, which he says we cannot dispense with—and yet he wishes to continue it as a bounty of \$3 per 100 lbs. (not the long hundred of 112 lbs.,) until the sugar planting and sugar manufacture should be extended, so as to supply the whole demand of our consumption. Then, what becomes of the revenue from sugar, that we cannot dispense with? This is what I call a suicidal argument—It destroys itself.

But, we must not reduce the duty to what it stood at, only eight

years ago, because it will injure the sale of the public lands—Yes, sir, the public lands! for which, sold or unsold, we never get paid. The gentleman would persuade us that we are under obligation to such purchasers as bought the sugar lands under the existing duty—and how many sugar estates have been established on lands bought of the public—and since the year 1816, too? Sir, this argument of obligation to tax ourselves, for the profit of these overgrown sugar planters, will not hold water—It will not even hold cotton.—[Mr. Tod's reiterated motions to enhance the tax on cotton bagging, had just succeeded by the Speaker's casting vote.] We are not to reduce the duty on sugar, for fear of injuring the sale of the public lands, for which, although we may obtain nominal payment, we shall never receive one penny.

[Mr. McLane, at the commencement of his reply, appearing to be much irritated, Mr. Randolph rose and assured him that he intended not the slightest personal disrespect or offence—but Mr. McLane went on to say that the gentleman from Virginia had displayed a good head—but he would not accept that gentleman's head, to be obliged to have his heart along with it.]

Mr. Randolph replied.

It costs me nothing, sir, to say that I very much regret that the zeal which I have not only felt but cherished, on the subject of laying taxes in a manner which, in my judgment, is inconsistent, not merely with the spirit, but the very letter of the constitution—should have given to my remarks, on this subject, a pungency, which has rendered them disagreeable, and even offensive to the gentleman from Delaware. For that gentleman I have never expressed any other sentiment but respect—I have never uttered, or entertained, an unkind feeling towards that gentleman, either in this House or elsewhere—nor do I now feel any such sentiment towards him—I never pressed my regard upon him—I press it upon no man. He appears to have considered my remarks as having a personal application to himself. I certainly did not intend to give them that direction, and I think that my prompt disclaimer of any such intention ought to have disarmed his resentment, however justly it may have been excited. He has been pleased, sir, to say something, which, no doubt, he thinks very severe, about my head and my heart.

How easy, sir, would it be for me to reverse the gentleman's proposition, and to retort upon him, that I would not, in return, take that gentleman's heart, however good it may be, if obliged to take such a head into the bargain.

But, sir, I do not think this—I never thought it—and, therefore, I cannot be so ungenerous as to say it: for, Mr. Speaker, who made me a searcher of hearts?—of the heart of a fellow man, a fellow sinner? Sir, this is an awful subject! better suited to Friday or Sunday next, [Good Friday and Easter Sunday,] two of the most solemn days in the Christian calendar—when I hope we shall all consider it, and lay it to heart as we ought to do.

But, sir, I must still maintain that the argument of the gentleman is suicidal—he has fairly worked the equation, and one half of his ar-

gument is a complete and conclusive answer to the other. And, sir, if I should ever be so unfortunate as, through inadvertence, or the heat of debate, to fall into such an error, I should, so far from being offended, feel myself under obligation to any gentleman who would expose its fallacy, even by ridicule—as fair a weapon as any in the whole Parliamentary armory. I shall not go so far as to maintain, with my Lord Shaftsbury, that it is the unerring test of truth, whatever it may be of temper—but if it be proscribed as a weapon as unfair as it is confessedly powerful, what shall we say (I put it, sir, to you, and to the House,) to the poisoned arrow?—to the tomahawk and the scalping knife. Could the most unsparing use of ridicule justify a resort to these weapons? Was this a reason that the gentleman should sit in judgment on my heart?—yes, sir, *my* heart—which the gentleman, (whatever he may say,) in his heart believes to be a frank heart, as I trust it is a brave heart. Sir, I dismiss the gentleman to his self-complacency—let him go—yes, sir, let him go—and thank his God that he is not as *this* Publican.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 13.

I rise, sir, for the purpose of offering to the consideration of this House an amendment to the bill before them, which nothing but an imperious sense of duty could have induced me, *rebus existentibus*, to propose. It will be recollected that, in the year 1816, an additional duty was laid on brown sugar. My present object is to reduce the duty to what it then was. I shall not take up the time of the House—I never have done it—in discussing the general principles of any bill on the consideration of its details. We all know the depreciation of money which has taken place since 1816: that revulsion in the pecuniary concerns of this country, many of us, in our own persons, and all of us in the persons of our friends, yet live to deplore. Sir, what was the comparative value of money then and at present? Do we not all know that at that time a duty of 6 cents per lb. on sugar would not have been as much felt as a duty of 3 cents is felt now? Sir, there was not a man, with the exception, perhaps, of a few miserable usurers and muckworms, who could not then get \$6 easier than he now can get 3. For myself, I could more easily have paid \$3 at that time, than I can pay \$1 to-day. Sir, the demon of speculation had taken possession of the public mind—the bubble, not, sir, of the South Sea or the Mississippi, but one every whit as mischievous—was then fully blown to its utmost expansion, and was near bursting. Yet the duty on this article—an article we are all obliged to consume; in its necessity next to the articles of salt and iron, in universal demand; and entering into the food of the poorest man in the community, would not have been as great, in proportion to the value of money—at \$6 then, as it is now at \$3. Sir, I want to know on what principle it is that the sugar planter, who gets his mules, his stave-timber, the provisions for his slaves at the first hand and on the cheapest possible terms, cannot be satisfied with a *protection*—(the word is not mine; I disclaim every thing of the kind, but I use it in gentlemen's own sense of the term,)—yes sir, a protection

of 2½ cents a pound on their sugar? Sir we have had a practical commentary in the success of the last amendment, (Mr. Tod's, on cotton bagging,) on the effects of perseverance: I hope we shall profit by it; I hope it will animate, especially, every opponent of the bill to keep the faith; to fight the good fight, and to hold out to the end. [Here Mr. Brent interposed.]

Sir, I have not yet done. My proposition, sir, is not to lay a tax, but to take one off. But, from the effect it seems to produce, I could really think that by some necromantic process, I had been suddenly transferred to a Chamber of Deputies, or to a British House of Commons, to the deliberative hall of some one of the older—I will not say the more corrupt—I disclaim the imputation—but one of the older and more *astute* governments of Europe. Sir, I am wrong. I rather could wish I was thus transferred: for, in the British Parliament, I should see duties reduced to less than one half of their former amount; not indeed from choice, sir, for power is sweet, and so is money; but the British ministry have been driven to the reduction, and on the necessary article of salt, seven eighths of the duty has been taken off, and they are pledged to repeal the remainder. But here, sir, by some strange conjunction of the planets—for evidently it cannot have been by any constellation being in opposition—a most extraordinary effect has been produced. In this most popular branch of the most popular government in the world, we, who come immediately from the people, whose arteries may be expected to pulsate and keep measure with their own, instantly become extremely fastidious, so soon as any proposal is made, the object of which is to lessen the burthens of the country. Sir, were it not as plain as the noon day sun, I would quote high authority in this House, to prove what I have said of the distresses of the country. Sir, the very stamp act itself could hardly throw us into a greater flame than a proposal to diminish any of the taxes—aye, sir, or our own emolument, seems to excite in this house. But as it is a feeling in which I do not participate, as my feelings run in quite another direction, I find myself quite cool; never more unmoved in my life; for if, as I have some reason to fear, the tax shall not be reduced, I, sir, shall pay as little of it as any man.

APPENDIX.

NOTE 1.

I ought to have excepted Albert Gallatin, "the apostle of Truth, and the favorite votary of Liberty," as he was hailed by the companion of my early manhood. This gentleman might say, of the place in which he finds himself, what was said of a certain Doge of Genoa, I think, whom the arrogance of Louis XIV. ordered to Paris to make an apology, in his own person, for some offence on the part of that once proud republic, against the dignity of the Grand Monarque.

Had Montgomery, instead of falling on the heights of Abraham—where Montcalm and Wolfe, congenial spirits, also

"forsook"
Their mansions in this fleshly nook,"

survived to see the revolution of 1788—9, brought about, would it have ever been objected to him, that, by birth, he was an Irishman? Would his foreign descent have stood in the way of his other claims to the chief magistracy of the country?

Were Mr. Gallatin a French or Englishman, there would be some color to this objection. But he is a native of Geneva, and no good Genevese can worship at the shrine of a Bonaparte, or a Bourbon. I think it must be his citizenship of Virginia that stands mostly in the way of the elevation of this extraordinary man, who sees himself postponed to persons in no respect considerable, except for the modesty of their pretensions, who have never, and can never, render a tithe of his public services, and whose names were not known out of their own parish, so late as the acquisition of Louisiana, and the commencement of Mr. Jefferson's second term of Presidential service.

No foreigner, be it remembered, can ever become President, who was not a citizen at the time of the adoption of the new constitution of 1787. The door will soon be closed against them forever, be their merits and services what they may.

NOTE 2.

The principal of the debt proper of the United States, was funded at 6 per cent. but the payment of one third was postponed for ten years.

The interest, the evidences of which were called "*indents of interest*," was funded at 3 per cent.

Of the assumed debt, one-third was taken, on estimate, to be the amount of interest due upon it, which, at the time, could not be ascertained; and, also, funded at 3 per cent.

These two sums constitute the 3 per cent. stock of the United States.

Of the remaining two-thirds of the assumed debt, two-thirds, being the estimated amount of principal, equal to 2s. 8d. Virginia money, to a dollar, were funded, at 6 per cent.; and the remainder (one-third of two-thirds, or 1s. 4d. Virginia money, on the dollar) was also funded, at 6 per cent. but the payment postponed in like manner, as on the debt proper of the United States.

This is the origin of the term deferred stock, in our laws and financial statements.

One-third of the dollar	- - - - -	= 2
taken as interest and funded at 3 per cent.		
Two-thirds of the remaining 4s = 2s. 8d. at 6 per cent,	- - - - -	2 8
1-3 of 2-3 or $\frac{1}{4}$ deferred—also at 6 per cent.	- - - - -	1 4
		s. 6 0

NOTE 3.

From this admission I feel myself compelled to except the opinions, however long established, as to the impolicy of the expulsion of the *Morescoes* from Spain, and of the *Huguenots* from France by the revocation of the edict of *Nantz*. Never having been "*addictus jurare in verba magistri*," I have long ago taught myself to believe, that the alleged impolicy of these two celebrated measures (which I have never heard called in question by any authority whatsoever,) is one of those "vulgar errors" that ought to go to swell the catalogue of the ingenious Sir Thomas Brown. From the institution of the Passover to the latest experience of man, it will be found that two essentially different and hostile nations cannot peaceably and advantageously inhabit the same territory, and live under the same form of government. I have been led to ascribe the subsequent grandeur and power of France, mainly to the removal of this fruitful source of schism and of weakness. Had the Protestants remained in the bosom of France, their superior industry and intelligence would speedily have raised them to a level with their Catholic enemies and fellow subjects; and the seeds of incurable division and weakness, would thus have been sown, never to be eradicated.

With some millions of wealthy and exasperated *Moriscoes* in her bosom, could Spain have made the stand she did against the power of Bonaparte? It is this which renders Ireland a dead weight upon England, instead of a powerful auxiliary. Would Virginia have been impoverished in case she had expelled her black population, constituting the great mass of her productive labor at the peace of 1783? Suppose, instead of ceding her north western territory to Congress, she had, at the peace of 1783, driven every negro and mulatto, bond or free, across the Ohio? Would she now, think you, be less populous or powerful than she is at present? Would she now be driven to the humiliation of receiving the law, and, perhaps, a master, from the congressional and electoral influence beyond, not only the Ohio, but the Mississippi—beyond Aurora and the Ganges?

I speak of the results, not of the motives, of those celebrated measures. Was the Reformation not eminently beneficial to England, because it was owing to the lewd passions and ungovernable caprices of a tyrant even more odious than Louis XIV. or Philip IV.? Were the motives of his over-grown subjects, greedy for the spoils of the church, panting for the plunder of the rich *abbeys* and *benefices*, less infamous than those of their master? Is the Jack-all, who humbly receives the offal carcass, when the hunger of the royal beast is appeased by its blood, distinguished in any way to his advantage, from the monarch of the forest?

NOTE TO PAGE 40.

It is a subject of much regret to me, that at this time I had not had the benefit of the very able speech of his successor in office, Mr Robinson, which reached the United States a few days after. It ought to be reprinted in every leading paper in the Union.

With the good sense, liberality, manliness, and good faith, which characterize the whole speech, he states, that Government is pledged to the abolition of the small remnant of the salt tax; and if insisted on by the Opposition, the pledge shall be redeemed. He suggests, however, the policy of substituting some other reduction in lieu of the small tax now payable on salt, which he conceives to be as little burthensome at its present reduced rate, as any other, and more easy of collection.

NOTE 4.*List of exports of domestic growth.*

Cotton.

Tobacco.

Rice.

Indian corn—Exclusively Southern.

Flour, wheat, &c.

Lumber,

Naval stores.

